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THE ANNALS
OF THE
EARLY ENGLISH
SETTLEMENT IN BIHAR.

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PREFACE

The *Annals* is the fruit of my studies in the history of Bihar where I passed the best part of my life and which for its close association with all the different periods of Indian history has always had a strange fascination for me. I was specially attracted to that period of her history which, I found, had not yet been properly explored. It was only after I had begun working at it that I realised what a difficult task I had taken up. The paucity of materials available in India seriously handicapped me and naturally made my account sketchy. But such as it is, with all its imperfections on its head, I have ventured to publish this volume with the hope that the spade work that I have done may be of some help to a better equipped scholar coming after me to build up a handsome edifice.

With a view to enable the average reader "to place" the English settlement in Bihar in his mind I have given a short history of the early English intercourse with India. I have given some prominence, perhaps more than I ought, to the transactions of the English settlements in Bengal and the doings of the Mahomedan rulers both in and outside the province of Bengal and Bihar, as I thought that the affairs of Bihar factories, closely connected as they were with them, would be otherwise unintelligible.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the deep debt of gratitude I owe to my friends, Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Haraprosad Sastri, M.A., D. Litt, C.I.E., Prof. Jadunath Sarkar, M. A., C. I. E., and Principal E. A. Horne for their many valuable suggestions and illuminating

criticisms. Principal Horne has laid me under a further obligation by favouring my book with a *Foreword*.

I have to apologise for a fairly large number of mistakes that have crept into the book as it passed through the press. On account of pressure of work and persistent bad health I was not able to keep a careful watch on the press. I can only hope for better luck next time.

The Ripon College. }
September, 1927 }

FOREWORD.

Some years ago Principal N. N. Raye, who was then at Bhagalpur, gave me the manuscript, which has now taken final shape in the present volume, to read ; and I read it with very great interest.

Mr. Raye has collected his materials from many different sources, and has made excellent use of them ; for he possesses the faculty (all too rare) of making the dry facts live, and a happy literary gift, which makes what he writes eminently readable.

Like many other educationists, I have never ceased to mourn Mr. Raye's departure from this Province ; and I do not doubt that he continues to keep a warm place in his heart for Bihar.

Anyhow, here is his book about Bihar and the coming of the English to Bihar—a fascinating topic ; and I offer him my congratulations on accomplishing a task which many men, in the same circumstances, would have long since laid aside.

Patna College. }
The 30th. June, 1927.

E. A. Horne.

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THE ANNALS
OF THE
EARLY ENGLISH
SETTLEMENT IN BIHAR..

The Annals of . The English Settlement in Bihar.

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY ENGLISH INTERCOURSE WITH INDIA.

The first recorded reference to the English intercourse with India is the account given in the Saxon Chronicles of the embassy of King Alfred to the shrine of St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew in the ninth century. "This year, 883 A. D.," writes the Chronicler, "Sighelm Athelstane carried to Rome the alms the king had vowed to send thither as also to India to St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew."¹ This laconic statement was slightly elaborated three centuries later by William of Malmesbury in his Latin "Historical Account of England." "King Alfred" writes the monk, "being addicted to giving alms confirmed the privileges of churches as his father had determined; and sent also many gifts beyond the seas unto Rome and unto St. Thomas of India. His messenger in this business was Sighelmus, Bishop of Sherborne, who with great prosperity (which

1. *Saxon Chronicles*. Sub Anno 883.

is a matter to be wondered at in this our age) travailed to India and returning home brought with him many strange and precious unions and costly spices such as that country plentifully yieldeth."¹ There is, however, no other evidence than those bare statements to show that the English embassy really visited the Coromandel Coast where, according to tradition, St. Thomas had suffered martyrdom and had a shrine built to his memory in the first century. Gibbon suspects that the English ambassadors most likely had their "precious unions" and "costly spices" as also the legend of St. Thomas from the merchants of Egypt who had traded with India from Myos Hormus on the Red Sea since the first century A. D. if not earlier.²

The story of St. Thomas is, by the way, a rather interesting fact in the history of the intercourse of India with the West. Various accounts have been given of who St. Thomas was and when he suffered martyrdom.³ The most common tradition is that he was one of the apostles of Christ, the "doubting" Thomas, who was sent to India by the Master at the request of Gondaphorus and was slain by the heathens.⁴ The scene of the saint's martyrdom is identified with Mt. St. Thome, near Madras, on which a shrine was built to commemorate the incident. Whatever truth there might be in the story

1. *De Gestis Regum*.

2. *Decline and Fall*, vol. IV. P. 599.

3. "Whether the founder of the church was the apostle himself or Thomas, the Manicheean, who dated from the 3rd century or whether the Christians named themselves after Thomas, the Armenian who revised the church in the 8th century is a debatable matter."—*Love's Vestiges of Old Madras*. vol. I, p. 78.

4. Marco Polo says that the saint was slain by mistake by a party of heathens who had been shooting pea-fowls. *Voyages Book III*.

of the saint the legend clearly indicates that there was a Christian settlement in Madras in the dim past and that it was probably a colony of the Nestorian Christians from Syria.

The next reference to India is found in the famous *Travels* of Sir John Maundeville, long supposed to have been the first book printed in English by Caxton.²

The real compiler of the travels was Jean La Barbe who made use of the name of Sir John Maundeville, a man who belonged to an earlier generation and was known as a great traveller, as a convenient *nom-de-plume*. The book was written in French and published in 1356. The English versions, and there were several, appeared between twenty years before and after 1400. The author, whoever he might be, seems to have travelled no farther than Palestine, for his accounts of countries beyond the Holy Land are a strange medley of hearsay and imagination. Sir John describes how "Saint Thomas lyeth in the land of Mabaron (Maabar of Marco Polo) in a faire tombe" and how in the church there is a great image which is "a simulaere richly beset with precious stones and pearles".³ The ceremonies the pilgrims perform savor too much of the pagan and the progress of the saint in a chair before which pilgrims fall down and are killed is strangely reminiscent of the car-festival of Jagannath.

It was in the next century, the fifteenth, that serious efforts were made to reach the land of Cathay or Cataya. The success of Columbus in discovering America which he regarded as a part of the great Eastern Continent fired the imagination and deeply stirred the spirit of ad-

1. Hunter's *History of British India* Vol. I.

2. The first English book printed was *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*.

3. *Travels. Chapter III.*

venture of the bold mariners of England, and attempts were made to reach Cataya by sailing across the Atlantic.¹

In 1496 John Cabot and his three sons obtained letters patent from King Henry VII to fit out two ships and explore a passage to India. They failed but discovered instead the Island of Newfoundland and sailed along the coast of America from Virginia to Labrador.

In 1498 Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese navigator, discovered the route round the Cape of Good Hope. This was rightly regarded as a wonderful achievement and was very properly made the theme of the great national epic of Portugal.² The English, however, did not manifest at first any great eagerness to follow the footsteps of the Portuguese and avail themselves of this route. The discovery of a North-West passage seemed to have had a strange fascination for them.

In 1553 Sir Hugh Willoughby attempted to force his way through the ice-bound North-East and perished in the attempt. His second in command, Robert Chancellor, reached a port on the White Sea, whence he made his way to the court of the Grand Duke of Moscow and smoothed the way, as he thought, for an English overland trade with Moscow, Bokhara, Persia and India. Frobisher, Davis, Baffin, Hudson, sailed between 1553 and 1616 in the opposite direction, across the Atlantic, to discover a North West passage. They failed to do so, but discovered instead regions which have immortalized

1. This idea was abandoned only when Captain Behring, sent out on an exploring expedition by Peter the Great, found in 1782 that Asia was separated from America by the Strait that bears his name.

2. *Camoen's Lusiad*. One of its English translators was Julius Mickle better known as the author of the pathetic ballad "*The Cumnor Hall*".

their names. The discovery of the North East and North West passages was effected only in the last century when their value as convenient routes to India had ceased to exist.¹

It was, however, not merely the romantic glamour of the enterprise that influenced Englishmen in their efforts to discover a N. W. or N. E. passage. There were some prudential considerations also² that weighed with them. They thought that a North West or North East passage when discovered would be a shorter route than the one round the Cape which the Portuguese guarded with jealousy, spreading misleading reports of its dangers and treating all intruders south of Lisbon as pirates. There was also the danger of meeting the ships of Spain whose power on the sea was as yet undisputed.

In 1577 Sir Francis Drake circumnavigated the globe and touched at the island of Tidore in the Moluccas. He was the first Englishman to sail into the Indian seas and on his return to assure the people of Europe that Spain was but a "Colossus stuffed with clouts".³

In 1575 Thomas Stevens, an English Roman Catholic left Lisbon which was the transshipping station of all

1. Captain McClure discovered the N. W. passage in 1850-4 and Captain Norden Skjold achieved the N. E. passage in 187-89.

2. George Best, the Lieutenant of Frobisher, opens the account of his first voyage with the following remark: "Our General, Captain Frobisher, being persuaded of a new and nearer passage to Cathay than by Capo de Buona Speranza which the Portuguese yearly use &c."

Even in 1602 the newly established E. I. Coy. sent Capt. Waymouth through Fretum Davies to the kingdom of Cataya, the object being "to use a shorter northern route and avoid the long and tedious course round the Cape of Good Hope and the many kinds of dangers offered therein." The attempt was repeated in 1606 and 1614.

passengers from Europe to the East, on the 10th April and arrived at Goa on the 20th October after having been in the sea for six months and a half. He became the rector of the Jesuit College at Goa and wrote a letter to his people at home giving a glowing account of the wealth of India.

In 1583 Ralph Fitch, Willam Leedes, James, or John Newberry, Thomas Storey and several others started for India overland as merchant adventurers. Newberry was armed with a letter from Queen Elizabeth, addressed to the Great Moghul who was requested therein that "in respect of the hard journey which they have undertaken to places so far distant, it would please his majestie with some liberty and security of vorage to gratifie it with such privileges as to him shall seem good." Ralph Fitch who wrote the narrative of the journey made no mention of any consideration having been shown to the travellers in response to the Queen's letter.

The adventurers were seized by the Portuguese at Ormuz as spies, brought to India and imprisoned at Goa. After a fortnight's captivity they were let out of the prison through the intercession of the English Jesuit, Stevens, and his Dutch friend. Storey turned monk and entered a convent at Goa which he left afterwards to marry the daughter of an Indo-Portuguese and open a shop in the town.¹ The rest made their escape from Goa and went to the Court of Akbar. At Fatehpur, where the Court then was, they parted company. Leedes, the jeweller, entered the service of the Great Moghul "who did entertain him very well, gave him a house, five slaves, and a horse, and every day six SS (probably *shilling sterling*)" Fitch after a long peregrination through Bengal, Pegu, Ceylon

1. Orme's *Historical Fragments* quoted by Anderson P. 4. and La Valle's *Voyages*.

and the Archipelago returned to England in 1591. Newberry went towards Lahore promising to join Fitch in "Bengala" but was heard of no more. He was probably murdered in "his journey between Lahore and Persia."¹

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 gave a new impetus to the maritime enterprise of England. Portugal had become united with Spain in 1580, and Spain had ceased to be regarded even before this final blow was struck as the invincible master of the sea. The English, therefore, after their fruitless efforts to discover a North-East or North-West passage, no longer hesitated to follow the route round the Cape of Good Hope and try to participate in a trade hitherto monopolized by the Portuguese.* In 1591 James Lancaster "voyaged round the Cape of Buona Sperenza, along the eastern coast of Africa, beyond Cape Camorin as far as the mainland of Malacca and from thence home again."² The voyage including the return journey took Lancaster three years though the "Portugals" used to perform it in half that time. Lancaster brought home valuable information of the rich merchandise of Bengal and of the way trade was carried on between Bengal and Pegu and the islands of the Archipelago. But the voyage was an ill-starred one; the ship in which Captain Lancaster had sailed was lost and he had to return home in a French vessel after having suffered terrible privations.

The voyage of Lancaster was followed by the private

1. This is the suggestion of Sir H. Johnstone. Sir George Birdwood in his Report on the Old Records writes that Newberry became a shop-keeper at Goa. He was evidently confounding Newberry with Storey. After their escape from the Portuguese town it is unlikely that Newberry would think of returning to it.

2. *Hakluyt's Voyages* Vol. IV.

venture of Sir Robert Dudley who sent out three ships under Captain Wood. They left England in 1595 and were never heard of again. These disasters for a time discouraged further enterprise. But the flagging interest of the English adventurers was revived by the successful voyage of the Dutch Captain, Cornelius Houtman, who doubled the Cape of Good Hope, reached Sumatra and Bantam and brought back in 1597 a rich cargo of spices and a treaty with the king of Bantam. Within the next five years no less than 15 expeditions and 65 vessels sailed from Holland for the East and the Dutch trade with the East was firmly established.

The success of the Dutch naturally excited a spirit of emulation among the English merchants. In 1599 Sir John Mildenhall, the first English ambassador, voyaged to the straits of Gibraltar and thence proceeded overland by Aleppo and Persia to Agra where he arrived in 1603. He is said to have obtained a farnan, the first of its kind, from the Great Moghul which however proved useless on account of the establishment of the London Company in 1600.¹

The Dutch had taken advantage of their trade with the East to raise the price of pepper from 3s to 6s and then to 8s in 1599. By way of protest, the merchants of London met at Founders' Hall and resolved to form an association for trading directly with the East. The Company received the Queen's letters patent on 31st Decr, 1600, under the name of the "Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies". It was thus a peppercorn that led to the foundation of the great English Empire in the East.

¹ *Hunter's History of British India.* Vol. 1. p. 223,

CHAPTER II

THE EAST INDIA COMPANIES.

The East India Company thus suddenly ushered into existence forthwith started trading with the East. The first voyages of the Company from 1600 to 1612 were distinguished as "separate voyages", the subscribers individually bearing the expenses of each voyage and appropriating the whole profit of each. After 1612 the voyages were conducted on joint-stock accounts.

To place the trade with India on a firm and permanent basis it was deemed necessary that the consent of the ruler of the country should be obtained and some concessions and privileges secured. In 1608 Captain Hawkins arrived at Surat and proceeded to the Court of Jehangir to negotiate for permission for the establishment of a factory in that town. He danced attendance at court for three years and even took an Armenian wife to please the Great Moghul but all in vain. In 1612 he left the court sick of waiting and sailed away from Surat without having been able to secure any privilege for English trade or even a reply from the Emperor to King James's letter which he had presented on his arrival. It was only after Captain Best had won a victory over the Portuguese off Swally (1612) and made a favourable impression upon the native mind of English valour, that Thomas Aldworth succeeded in obtaining a *farman* from the Emperor dated, Agra, the 25th January, 1613.

whereby among other things it was stipulated that the English should be allowed to trade at Surat on paying a custom on all goods "of $3\frac{1}{2}$ p. c. upon the value and price they were worth when put into the custom house". A permanent factory was established at Surat on the receipt of the *Farman*.

In 1614 Sir Thomas Roe, was appointed ambassador and sent by his Majesty the King, James I, with a letter to the court of the Great Moghul. Sir Thomas Roe remained in India for two years and wrote a journal which gave a most graphic description of Jehangir and his court. He failed to procure a definite treaty but obtained permission of the Emperor for the establishment of factories at Gogra, Ahmedahad, Cambay and Ajmere and prevailed upon the Emperor to write a reply to king James's letter in which he guaranteed important privileges: "I have put forth my *Farmans*" he wrote, "through all my countries to this effect that if any English ships or merchants shall arrive in any of my ports, my people shall permit and suffer them to do what they will freely in their merchandising causes.....As for your merchants I have given express order through all my country to suffer them to sell, buy or transport and carry away at their pleasure without the let or hinderance of any person whatsoever, all such goods or merchandise as they shall desire to buy".¹ This permission of Jehangir was for a long time the sole authority on which rested the English trade in India.

1. Roe is said to have obtained another *Farman* from Prince Khurram as regards the English at Surat. No copy of it is extant. *Foster's Factories* (1618-21) P. 38.

The *farman* of Shajehan which was alleged to have been granted on 2nd Feb. 1634 has now been proved to be a myth. No copy of it does exist and nothing but a somewhat diffident and vague

The permission thus obtained enabled the Company to have a legal foothold in India for trade but for the rest they had to depend upon themselves. The protection of the great Moghul did not prove to be of any great value in overcoming the difficulties that they found themselves faced with and the difficulties were certainly of a very serious nature. The first and foremost of them was the hostility of the Portuguese and the Dutch who did all they could, by intrigue and open violence, first to prevent them from obtaining a footing in the country and then, when they had failed in their efforts in this direction, to hamper them in their trade operations. Next, they were greatly embarrassed by their own countrymen subsequently designated by the Company, "the Interlopers" who came to India to make their fortunes and often resorted to means which brought the whole nation into discredit with the Emperor and made the Company suffer for sins not their own. The first Interloper, Sir Edward Michelborne, came to India in 1604 and for eighteen months robbed and plundered in the Eastern Seas, seriously

allusion to it in the Council of Surat's letter dated the 21st Feb. 1634 has it in its support...Wilson's *Annals* p. 12. footnote, and also *Diaries of Streynsham Master* Vol. 1 p. 37.

A farman was granted by Shah Jehan to the English at Agra about 1651 freeing them from *Rahadharree* duties....W. Jesson at Agra to the President and Council at Surat. March 2, 1652. The most important *Farman* was the one that Aurungzeb granted to the factory at Surat in 1667. It formed the basis of nearly all the *farmans* subsequently granted by the Emperors...Mill's *History* Vol. I p. 98 : Anderson's *The English in Western India* p. 75.

In 1690 an ambiguous *farman* was granted to the factors in Bengal which was superseded by that of 1691 exempting them from all duties on payment of a *peshkash* of 3000- Rs. annually. Azim-us-shan's *Nishan* was confirmed by the Emperor in 1700. The last *farman* was granted in 1717 by Faruksiya. .

compromising the position of the English in the Archipelago. He sailed back to England in 1606 and fortunately never returned. Michelborne was followed by a host of others who amassed fortunes by infringing on the Company's monopoly. The Company first tried to suppress them by force, next to drive them out of the country with the help of the *farmans* and lastly to prevent them from coming out from England by setting in motion at home the machinery of law and court-intrigue. When all these means failed they tried to negotiate and come to terms; they made the greatest of the "Interlopers," the Governor of Madras.¹ But both force and negotiations proved unavailing; "interloping" continued to flourish and wax in strength till the "Interlopers" impressed with the value of concerted action formed themselves into a company, the Dowgate Association, and "interloping" properly so called, ceased to exist on any considerable scale.

The third difficulty the old Company had to face was the jealousy of the new rival companies.

The first East India Company, as we have seen, was founded in 1600. The Charter of Elizabeth by which it was incorporated, granted it the privilege of trading in the East for a period of 15 years, a period that might be extended by another term of 15 years if such extension were asked for by the Company and approved of by the Crown. In 1609 King James I confirmed the grant of the Queen, made the laws against "the Interlopers" more stringent and removed the time-limit of the grant, the Company, being allowed to enjoy the privileges in perpetuity, the Crown reserving however to itself the right of withdrawing them on three years' notice. In

1. *Hunter's History of British India Vol. II.*
Dalton's life of Thomas Pitt.

spite of this favourable attitude, the King was persuaded in 1617 to grant a patent to his compatriot, Sir James Cunningham, for a "Scottish Company to trade in Greenland, Muscovy and the East Indies." The first rival Company thus made its appearance but it lasted only for a few months. On the representation of the London Company the king recalled his grant in 1618, the London Company agreeing to compensate the patentee for the expenses he had incurred in starting the Company.

The next rival appeared in 1635. Charles I who had quarrelled with his Parliament and tried every possible means to raise money, after having exhausted the resources and patience of the Company by his repeated exactions, granted licence to a company of adventurers afterwards known by the name of *Courten's Association or the Assada Merchants* on the ground that "the London Company had consulted only its own interests and neglected those of the nation and broken the conditions on which exclusive privileges had been bestowed." The company remonstrated with the king, laid their grievances before Parliament but could get no redress; for 15 years the Association rode them like an incubus, till weary of incessant hostilities which handicapped them in all their operations, they proposed a union and the Company and Association were amalgamated in 1650 by a resolution of the House of Commons.

Under the Commonwealth the monopoly of the eastern trade enjoyed by the company came to be looked upon as unfair and the "Council of State recognized the claims of outside merchants by a cautious yet liberal issue of licenses for private trade." In 1654-55 "the Company of Merchant Adventurers" obtained a Charter from Cromwell to trade with India. On a petition, however, being made by the London Company the

whole question of "Regulating ¹*vs.* Joint Stock Companies" was considered and the Merchant Adventurers were amalgamated with the Old Company, the union being recognized by Cromwell's Charter of 1657." After the Restoration, the Company found a warm supporter in Charles II who armed the Company, so he thought, with power to deal more effectually with "the Interlopers." But inspite of all that the King or Company could do "Interloping" flourished and in 1691 the "Interlopers" formed themselves into a society known as the Dowgate Association and carried on a bitter hostility with the Old Company at home and abroad, taking advantage of which the Scottish Parliament, incorporated in 1695 "The Company of Scotland trading to Africa and the Indies." It proved, however, as shortlived as its predecessor had been and it disappeared in the midst of disastrous intrigues within a year of its birth.

On account of the Continental Wars King William III was always in need of money. The parliament authorised his government to raise 2½ millions by loan. In 1608 the London Company offered a loan of £700,000 at 4 p. c. in return for the confirmation of their charter by an act of Parliament. The Dowgate Association outbid them by offering 2 millions at 8 p. c. and they won the day. A new company was created under the name of the "English Company trading to the East Indies." The Charter was to endure for ever subject to the proviso of redemption after 1711. This was the last and bitterest rival of the Old Company. After a long protracted struggle which did good to neither and served

1. A *Regulating Company* was one in which the individual members were allowed to trade each with his own capital and his own ships and appropriate to himself the whole profit accruing from the venture.

only to scandalize observers by the intrigue and corruption both sides freely practised, a union was effected in 1708 by the award of Goldolphin. The old and new Companies were amalgamated under the name of the "United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies." This body receiving at intervals new charters prolonging its monopoly, continued its corporate existence till the cataclysm of the Mutiny brought about its dissolution and its vast dominions and splendid revenues went over to the Crown in 1858.

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLY ENGLISH SETTLEMENT IN INDIA.

The first foothold the English had secured in India was, as has been seen, at Surat, where they obtained permission to set up a factory in 1612. The port of Surat had been famous for its trade from the remotest antiquity.¹ It was not merely this fame, however, that attracted the English to Surat. It was situated on the western coast of India, the side nearest to Europe. It was on a part of the coast where the Portuguese had not as yet obtained a permanent footing though since 1573 they had been the masters of the Surat seas. At Surat the English would be under the direct protection of the Emperor and would have nothing to do with the petty princes of the south whose goodwill the Portuguese had already enlisted on their side. Moreover it had been recommended to them by the factors at Java as the best place from where they could supply cloths and calicoes, a suggestion afterwards endorsed by Thomas Aldworth, the first factor at Surat, who described it as "the only key to open all the rich and best trade of the Indies."²

The factory at Surat soon started several subordinate agencies in northern India and grew in importance till the

1. Ptolemy, the Greek Geographer, mentions *Pulipula*, identified with *Phulpada*, the sacred part of the city of Surat.

2. Letters recived by the Company from its servants, *Danvers*. Vol. I p. 238.

President at Surat was recognised in 1630 as the chief of the English settlements in India. In 1668 the Company had the island of Bombay transferred to them by Charles II for an annual payment of £10. Bombay inherited the importance of Surat. In 1687 it "was made the chief seat of the British Government, in India, all the other settlements being subordinated to it".¹

Bombay, however, was not the first territorial possession of the Company in India. The first tract of land they owned and the first and only fortified place they possessed for a long time, lay south on the Coromandel coast. The earliest settlement of the English on the south-eastern coast of India was at Pettapoli, which, however, on account of its pestilential climate, was soon found to be unsuitable. They left it, sailed a little further up and landed at Masulipatam where the Dutch had already built a factory and started trading with the permission of the Raja of Golconda (1619). But the Dutch won over the local Governor and made the position of the English factors so "insufferable" that on September, 27, 1628, "They stole out of their factory, leaving all behind, and set off in a small boat for Armagaon where in 1626 the English Council had obtained permission from the petty coast chief to erect a factory". But Armagaon was too poor a place to serve as aught save a temporary refuge. So it was soon abandoned for a new settlement further south. This was Madras. In 1639 Sir Francis Day obtained from the Raja of Chandragiri the grant of a piece of land on the shore and the right to build a fort on it. Without waiting for permission from home, Sir Francis built an embraasured factory and christened it Fort St. George

1. Auber. Vol. 1 P. 15.

after the patron saint of England.¹ Though subordinated to Surat and later born, the southern settlement possessed an unique importance. It was the first territorial possession of the English, the first fortified place they were to own in India for a long time to come and it was from here that they made their way to and effected a settlement in Bengal and thence in Behar, a feat the Surat Agency had tried in vain to achieve.

The well-known wealth of Bengal could not but have made the English traders eager to effect a settlement there. The travellers who had visited India gave glowing accounts of it. Caesar Frederick, the merchant of Venice, who came to India about 1563 and whose account of his travels, translated by Thomas Hicklock, was published in Hakluyts' Voyages in 1589, saw how in the "port of Satgaon every year lade thirtie or five and thirtie ships, great and small, with rice, cloth of bombast of diverse sorts, lacca, great abundance of sugar, mirabolam dried and preserved, long pepper, oyle zerkeline" and other sorts of merchandise." Ralph Fitch in his account published in 1591 described how he went "from Agra to Satgaon in Bengala" and found it "a faire city, very plentiful of all things." Captain Lancaster who was at Puntadel Galli on the island of Zeilon (i. e. Ceylon) saw the ships coming from Bengala, bring "fine pavillions for beds, wrought quilts, fine calicut cloths, pintados" and other fine works and rice." Vasco da Gama though he had not visited Bengal procured information

1, Hunter's British India Vol. II Chapter II.

2. Oil of sardine an East Indian pilchard valued for its oil.

3. Painted cloths, "full of figures, great and small, prettily representing sundry trades and occupations of the Indians with their habits." *Evelyn's Diary—Sub Anno 1655*.

and reported to Portugal in 1498 that "the country could export quantities of wheat and very valuable cotton goods. Cloths which sell on the spot for twenty-two shillings and six pence fetch ninety shillings at Calicut. It abounds in silver." When the Portuguese actually established trade relations with Bengal (1537) they realised to their satisfaction what a mine of wealth they had found.¹

The English traders must have heard also in what estimation Bengal was held by the Moghul Emperors for its wealth and fertility. Aurungzeb called it the "Paradise of Nations." In all official papers, *farmans* and *parwanahs* of the Moghul Empire, when there was a question of Bengal, it was never named without these words being added, "The paradise of India," an epithet given to it "*par excellence*".²

It would not be surprising, therefore, if the Company's servants cast longing looks towards Bengal and there are clear indications of it in their early letters. In 1616 Sir Thomas Roe moved Prince Khurram for a *farman* for Bengal which was refused probably for reasons Sir Thomas gave to the Company in his letter dated, February, 14, 1618. "Bengala hath no port but such as the Portuguese possess for small shipping. It will vent nothing of yours. The people are unwilling in respect of the war (as they suppose) like to ensue in their seas; and the Prince hath crossed it thinking we desired to remove thither wholly, and *that*, if we stay

1. Appendix to the Rotiero of Vasco da Gama quoted by Campos in his "*Portuguese in Bengal*" p. 25.

2. Hill's *Bengal in 1756-7*, Vol. I. Mutaquerhin calls Bengal "Terrestrial Paradise." See also copies of *farmans* granted by the Moghuls to the Company.

in India, he takes to be an affront¹." The servants of the Company, however, wished the authorities not to give up trying. William Methwold at Masulipatam wrote to Sir Thomas Roe at Surat on December 9, 1618.² "If any innovations or hopes of trade to Bangala should occur it cannot but be somewhat helpfull to our proceedings."³ The Company approved of silk and sahanas, quilts and carpets from Bengal and their President at Surat procured some samples from Agra and wrote to Masulipatam to make inquiries.³

In a letter dated August, 1619 the Surat Agency more definitely outlined the intention of the Company, "As for trade in Bengala our masters have often required the attempt, in expectacione, itt seems, of some profitable commodities thence for England, but as the case standes, wee see not how it can as now be undertaken."

Some of these "profitable commodities" have been mentioned above. One commodity, however, which was not as yet regarded as "profitable" came to be thought very much so a few years later and of this Bengal and more particularly Bihar possessed almost a monopoly. This was salt-petre. The wars in Europe in the middle of the 16th century created a great demand for it and in England various expedients were adopted for securing an increased supply of saltpetre of good quality. Elizabeth had taken it under the direct control of the Crown; James I had appointed a sworn proofmaster who had the exclusive right of purchasing salt-petre.⁴ Charles I finding the supply at home inadequate endeavoured to obtain a

1. Roe's Journal chap. IX p. 114.

2. *English Factories* (1618-21).

3. Letters from Surat 3rd March 1619.

4. Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*. Vol. 1 p. 290.

supply from the East Indies. The first order for saltpetre was placed with the Company in 1624 and with a view to encourage them in its importation, the king granted the Company a license in 1626 to make gunpowder for its own use.¹ The king's need of saltpetre increased with the breaking out of the Civil Wars and the wars on the Continent. This would explain the incessant demand of the Court for salt-petre and constant reference to it in their letters to their servants in India. No saltpetre was to be had in Surat or its immediate neighbourhood. It was procurable at Agra and Ahmedabad. Formerly it could be had very cheap so that Kerridge, the President at Surat, suggested they should imitate the Dutch and use it as ballast.² But the sudden demand for it made its meagre supply in northern India fail, for, wrote the Agra Agent in 1628, "There having been few buyers the saltpetre people had given up making it." The exactions of the king and the nobles and the difficulty and cost of carrying it from Agra and Ahmedabad to Surat greatly enhanced its price. The supply of saltpetre on the Coromandal Coast was neither very good nor large; and its trade in that commodity ceased when commercial relation with Bengal was established. Special emphasis was laid upon saltpetre in the instructions given to the pioneer settlers in Bengal. It may be said, therefore, that silk and salt-

1. This privilege was withdrawn in 1637. But the Company were forced to import saltpetre and sell it to the state officer at the price fixed by the king. Formerly saltpetre used to be sold, like other commodities of the Company by *candle auction*, i. e. an one inch candle was lighted and the highest bid made before the candle went out had the goods. The Company, however, made gunpowder in India and stored it in their Factory at Calcutta.

2. It was shipped always as ballast.

petre were the two commodities that specially attracted the English to Bengal and Bihar.

The eyes of the English having thus been always turned to Bengal, attempts were made, on the first opportunity presenting itself, to effect a settlement there. The first attempt to reach it was naturally made from the north where the traders had their chief seat and it took place in 1620, eight years after the founding of the factory at Surat.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATTEMPTS OF THE COMPANY TO REACH BENGAL FROM THE NORTH.

As has been said before the factory at Surat had a number of subordinate agencies in northern India of which the most important was that of Agra. Sir Thomas Roe had urged the withdrawal of the factors from Agra on the score of expense and suggested that business there might be transacted through native merchants. But the advice did not meet with the approval of the Court who considered the agency an important one since it enabled them to watch over their interests in the court of the Emperor and defeat the intrigues of the Portuguese and the Dutch who were constantly trying to undermine the favour they had secured.¹ It also afforded them facilities for procuring for dispatch to Europe indigo, carpets and calicoes from countries further south. Fettyplace was the first chief at Agra and Robert Hughes his second. In compliance with the orders of the Court, samples of calico called *Amberty*² procured at Agra from Bihar

1. *English Factories* (1618-21) p. 52.

2. *Amberty* was a kind of white cotton cloth, "strong, close-made and well-conditioned and had no fault but narrowness (its width was 40 inches). It was manufactured at *Luckhaur* some 30 miles south of Patna". Peter Mundy's Journals.

Foster supposes the word to be a corruption of *Amrita* (*nectar*) hence "something divine or exceedingly beautiful."

B. Hamilton mentions several varieties of this kind of cloth

traders had been forwarded by the Agra Chief to England in 1618. They were looked upon with favour by the Directors and it was decided to send two merchants to *Hagrepore-Pattania* (Hajipur—Patna)¹ or “where else the *Amberties* were made” to purchase an assortment and also to see whether they could secure Bengal silk on advantageous terms.

On the 5th of June 1620, Hughes started from Agra alone and without any merchandise but only with bills of exchange to the value of Rs. 4,000. The Governor of Bihar, who had been the Governor of Guzerat² and had come into contact with the English in Western India, seemed “wondrous pleased” at the arrival of the factor, promised him his protection and helped him “to find a house in the great bazar near unto the kotwal’s choultry on a rent of Rs. 6/12/- per month”. Hughes found the Portu-

Amrita-rasi, *Amrita-naya-rasi*, *Amrita-mili* and *Amrita-naya-mili*, the last being the costliest, a piece costing Rs. 4 As. 5. The size of a piece was 36 cubits by 1½ cubits. *Martin’s Eastern India Vol. I Appendix.*

1. The cloth must have been of a comparatively recent invention and celebrity. There is no mention of it in *Aini Akbari*. According to Abul Fazl *Ambari* was a silk cloth and *Amberty* or *Amriti*, the name of a musical instrument.

Hajipur was the headquarters of a *sarkar* of 11 *pergannas*. It was built by and named after Haji Ilyas, king of Bengal (1342-58) and was situated opposite Patna.

2. This was Maquarrab Khan. Stewart says that Afzul Khan was the Governor of Bihar at the time. It is a mistake. Afzul Khan was the Governor from 1608 to 1612 (?) He died in 1613. *Elliot Vol. VI.*

There was another Afzul Khan. A faithful servant of Prince Khurram, Mulla Shukurulla Shirazi, was invested by Jehangir with the title of Afzulkhan. He died at Lahore in 1639 and was buried near Agra. He never came to Bengal.

guesse already in possession of the market. They used to come in "diverse frigats" from *Golye* and *Pippulye* (Hugli and Pippli) and buy all "they could lay their hands on". Hughes waited for his assistant, John Parker, who arrived with some goods in September and then started business.

A *corcona* (*karkhana* or factory) was established, money was advanced to the weavers of Luckhawar and some raw silk from Bengal, quilts of Satgaon and *elachis*¹ from Bicantpore were purchased. A consignment thus made up was forwarded at the end of November with a sanguine account of the prospects of trade.

But a longer experience cooled the enthusiasm of the factors and they changed their note. The cost of carriage was heavy, varying from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ Rs. per *maund*; the roads were bad so that journey to and from Agra could be undertaken only at the end of the rains and it took 35 days to reach Agra by cart though the distance from Patna to Agra was, according to the calculation of the time, only 406 miles.² Then there were the king's soldiers and the highwaymen, both equally rapacious.³ They now wrote to Agra that for silk they should send to *Muksudabad* (afterwards Murshidabad) and *Sideabad* (Saidabad) and that it was not profitable to maintain a factory at Patna for calicoes alone which it

1. Elachi was a kind of cloth woven of silk and cotton thread so as to look like the surface of Elachi (Cardamun). Boicantpore is a town 10 miles east of Patna,

2. *Bukhtiyar Khan's Mirat-i-Alam—Elliot Vol. VII p. 163* "From Agra to Allahabad 107 cos; from Allahabad to Patna 96 cos and a fraction.

3. Hughes and Parker in their letter to the Company dated the 14th. Aug. 1621 complained that "the goods provided last year were robbed and plundered by the Deccan Army."

would be to their advantage to buy at nominally higher price at Agra.

The factors had also to suffer some serious personal discomforts. In March, 1521, the city was devastated by a fire. The English merchants escaped with their lives but their house with a large portion of their goods was burnt. It was very difficult to find another house. After long and painful search they managed to get hold of one only to be deprived of it immediately after. Moquarrab Khan, the friendly Governor had been transferred to Agra¹ and Prince Parvis who had received Bihar as his Jagir, came down with a large retinue to provide accomodation for whom, many people were turned out of their houses and among the rest the English factors. For ten days they had to wander about "in search of some place to cover themselves and their goods though but with grass." At last they secured a shelter "through the help of Mr. Money" who was evidently as influential a gentleman three centuries ago as now.

The Company saw that the venture was a failure. The factors were ordered in June, 1621, to dissolve the factory and return to head quarters. But this they could not do at once. Parker had fallen ill and the remnants of their goods could not be collected and dispatched till October. Hughes left Patna in September; Parker, getting a little better, followed him in a few weeks. Thus ended the first English attempt to settle in Bihar.

But their connection with Patna did not cease with the departure of the factors. Patna goods continued to be purchased at Agra from the Bihar traders, the Moghuls

1. This Moquarrab Khan was a great physician which accounts for his being "insistent for three or four cases of empty bottles". Hughes had to write Agra for them.

and Prachyas¹ whom Hughes had found swarming in Patna; silk and cloth thus bought were sold at Surat at a considerable profit occasionally so much as 15 p. c. though sometimes the goods would be lost or damaged in transit on account of the long distance they had to travel overland.²

Silk and calicoes were not the only commodities from Patna that were in demand at Surat. The Company often asked the Surat Agent to procure for them shells which were then obtainable only at Patna. "The shells required by Captain Crispe" writes President Hopkinson "are not to be had here but at Pattania; they are brought thither from the Maldives".³ These shells or cowries were used as small coins in India as they were and still are in some parts of Africa. Captain Crispe was in the Guinea trade "for which they would be very useful".

In January 1622 there came to Agra an Italian⁴ on

1. Foster takes them to have been the "Merchants of Upper India". But Mundy's explanation is more correct. He thinks they were "the Armenians". Prof. J. N. Sarkar suggests that they were either Brachios or Persians.

2. *Hughes and Parker to Surat. Feb. 23, 1622.*

Hawkrige to Surat, Jany. 1622. "In crossing the river at Thalner (in Khandesh) two of the bundles of cloth from Patna got wet, but have been dried again".

3. *Surat letter Jan. 15, 1623.* Cowries were in demand in England even a century later. A resolution of the Council of Fort William dated the 4th September, 1715 was to the effect "that all cowries collected throughout the whole year for revenues be monthly put into bags and delivered into the care of the Export Warehouse Keeper that we may not be wholly in want of cowries when we want them to be shipped to England". They were wanted for many other purposes than Guinea trade.

4. Villentine Bernardine. *Hughes and Parker to Surat October 18, 1621.*

his way to Patna to make investments there for Persia. He must have obtained much valuable information from the factors who "dispeeded him on his way". But he was not heard of again. Probably he availed himself of one of the "Portugall's frigats" that came to Patna from *Golye* and *Pippulye* (Hugli, & Pippli) and sailed down the Ganges to the sea and by sea to Persia whence he had come.

Twelve years later another attempt was made. In August 1632 Peter Mundy at Agra was ordered to Patna through a strange blunder on the part of the authorities at Surat who wrote "Patna" when they meant "Samana" a town in the Patiala State and once famous for a kind of soft cloth of a yellowish colour which was named after its place of manufacture.

Mundy accompanied by a native broker arrived at Patna on the 16th September, 1632, succeeded in selling some quicksilver and vermillion and after a stay of two months, returned to Agra and corroborated the report of Hughes and Parker that it was not profitable to maintain a factory at Patna.

Meanwhile events were happening in southern India which were big with the fate of the East India Company.

CHAPTER V

SETTLEMENT IN BENGAL.

We have seen how the English had always been thinking of effecting a settlement in Bengal. They made two attempts from the north and failed. They now turned their attention to the south. They had obtained a footing at Masulipatam and they thought that Bengal would be of easier access from there by sea than from the north overland through Bihar. They had the example of the Portuguese and the Dutch before them.¹ The Portuguese were already well established in Bengal. They had founded factories at Pippli and Hugli and had been sending their merchants up the Ganges to Bihar to collect merchandise. The Dutch had followed the footsteps of the Portuguese and had been tapping the resources of Bengal for several years.

There were other circumstances, too, that about this time, the fourth decade of the 17th century, forced the English merchants of the Coromandel Coast to think seriously of a settlement in Bengal.

Since 1630 the Company's servants in India had been in a woful plight. A dreadful famine had burst

1. The Portuguese had begun frequenting Hugli in 1530. Their factory at Hugli was founded in 1537-8 according to Stewart and Campos, in 1557 according to Wilson and 1575 according to *Bengal Past and Present Vol. II*. The date given by Campos based upon Portuguese authorities is presumably the right one. The Dutch had a footing at Pippli before their factory at Chinsurah was built in 1632.

upon the country making the whole tract of land from Guzerat to Golconda Coast one vast charnel house.¹ The terrible drought that had brought it on was followed by a deluge of rain which spoilt the crops of the following year making the scarcity still more terrible. The business of the Company came to a stand-still. Many of the subordinate factories were dissolved and their factors withdrawn to Surat "for want of business and saving of charges". In the train of famine appeared sickness and laid a heavy toll on the already disseminated population. The high prices of foodstuffs made the coasting trade in the produce of Bengal which like the northern river basins had been comparatively free from the curse, very lucrative and the general dearth of piecegoods on account of the mortality among the weavers and washers made the coarse silks and cottons of Bengal and Bihar very desirable commodities in the eyes of the factors at Masulipatam who had become weary of sitting with folded hands in the midst of a scene of desolation and watching their comrades fall ill and die. They must do something if only to forget their present misery. Accordingly when the "*Hopewell*" arrived at Armagaon in June 25, 1631, she was ordered to sail up to Pippli. She reached *Calapara*² on the Orissa coast and was favourably received by Baquir Khan, the Governor of Orissa. but she returned from there without pushing further on to her destination.

1. *Badshanamah. Elliot's History Vol. VII p. 24.* Also Letters to the Company from January 1632 to Jan'y 1633. *Factory Records (1630-33).*

2. A port difficult to identify. It might be Gopalpore, 12 miles south of Ganjam, which answers the description given of it by Thomas Wyatts Master of the "*Hopewell*" in his letter to the Company dated Jan'y 2, 1632.

The next year the prospects brightened a little. "Off late there hath fallen an abundance of raigne in theise parts as the like hath not been in divers years tofore; through which and the Almighty's blessing wee are in greate expectacione of a plentiful harvest, to the exceeding joy of all poor people, by famine and mortalitie reduced to a small number".¹ When the *Pearl* arrived at Armagaon in August, 1632, she was ordered to follow up the attempt that had been made by the *Hopewell* in the preceding year and to get to a Bengal port. But the "tyme did not afford our shipp the getting to a port in Bengala and so, having spent this time not to much purpose", wrote the Master of the *Pearl* "we are returned only with the discoverie of some places or ports which may yeald benefitt to our imploires in future times". She had started early in October and returned on the 27th November and probably sailed only up to Harisporc. At any rate she brought back an important piece of news which she had picked up at Manikpatan.—that the Portuguese settlement at Hugli had been plundered and taken by the Moghul forces.²

The same month the *Pearl* returned to Masulipatam, the English obtained the *Golden Farman* from the King of Golconda which proved to the settlement of Masulipatam what the Prince Imperial's grant to Sir Thomas Roe had proved to the factory at Surat.³ Thus finding themselves secure at Masulipatam and encour-

1. *Foster's Factory Records (1630-33)* Introduction p. xxvii

2. *Dagh Register (1631-34)* p. 45, quoted in *Foster's Factory Records (1630-33)* p. 244 footnote.

3. *Hunter's History Vol. II* p. 78 Footnotes. Foster thinks that it was granted in Feb. 1634. It might be that the negotiations had been finally concluded in Novr. 1632 though the farman did not come out of the Kings *Daftar* till two years later.

aged by the news the *Pearl* had brought back from Manikpatam the English made up their mind to send out a third expedition to Bengal. Accordingly on the 6th April, 1633 a party of Englishmen two merchants—Cartwright and Colley—six sailors or attendants, one of the sailors being Willaim Brunton, Quarter-master of the *Hopewell*, who has left an interesting account of the voyage in his "*Near from the East Indies or a Voyage to Bengala*" (published in 1638)—departed from Masulipatam in a country junk. On Easter day, April 21, they anchored off a place they called *Harsapore*, modern *Harishpurgarh*, at the mouth of the River *Patua*, modern *Alanka*, in Orissa. Cartwright went over to Cuttack, saw the Governor, *Aga Mahomed Zaman*, the successor of Baquir Khan and obtained from him a *perwanah* granting the English the liberty "to traffic and export, free of customs at any port of Orissa and to purchase ground, erect factories and build or repair ships". Cartwright built a house of business at Hariharpore, half way up the river to Cuttak from Harishpore and the next month founded a factory at Balasore. The next year (1634) they are said to have obtained a farman from Shah Jehan "giving them liberty to trade in the whole country of Bengala but restraining their shipping unto the port of Pippli at the mouth of the Subarnarekha" ("the streak of gold") It might have been a myth but the rumour must have been of some help to the factories. Everything seemed to smile upon the adventurers and they projected outlying factories at Puri and Pippli. But their prosperity proved a very short-lived one.

Their merchandise consisting chiefly of broad-cloth and lead found no purchaser at Balasore and lay nearly a year unsold. They had to "be dispeeded to Pattana, a month's journey into the country as they had no mar-

ket on the sea coast."¹ The luscious fruits and cheap arrack of Orissa proved for the reckless Englishmen temptations too strong to resist. During the rainy season "deadly malaria of the swamps crept round the factory as an army round a beleagured city" and before the end of the year five of the six factors had perished, victims to arrack and malaria. The Portuguese ships from Chittagong and Arrakan swooped down upon the river mouth and the Dutch fleet from the Archipelago and Madras blocked the roadstead. Cartwright was detected in an intrigue with the wife of a Mahomedan who lived next door to his factory, whereupon the Nabob not only imprisoned the offender and fined him but also ordered the factory buildings to be pulled down. Some means, however, were found for averting this doom. But the fate of business was sealed. Early in January, 1636, Cartwright returned from the Bay of Bengal and was succeeded by John Yard. But the change did no good; there was no hope of improvement, "for the factors", says the *Dagh Register*, "looked after their own interests rather than those of the Company". The settlement of Orissa had already come to be regarded as an unprofitable burden and in 1641 the ship *Diamond* was ordered to Balasore to pay off the debts and bring away the factors. This took some time, and before the order could be carried out there came on inspection Sir Francis Day, the Founder of Madras (1642). He persuaded the Directors to retain Balasore as a transshipment station, follow the example of

1. *Factory at Masulipatam to the Company* Oct. 22, 1634.

2. *Dagh Register* (1631-34) p. 415. *Foster's Records* (1634-1636) Introduction p. xxxvi.

the Portuguese and the Dutch and found a settlement in Bengal.¹

The attempt to effect a settlement in Bengal was made under not very auspicious circumstances. The Company might or might not have obtained a *farman* from Shah Jehan allowing them to trade in Bengal. (1634). Though they made as much show of it as they could they knew the value of such *farmans* in those unsettled times. "While every one honors the King", wrote the President at Surat, "no man obeys him. So it comes to pass that his *farmans* can neither inforce us to Pippli nor yet exclude us Hariharpore."² Then "there was hardly any hope of their being able "to capture the trade of the Portugals" and step "into their shoes" for they had been restored to favour by the Emperor" and

1. The practice of transhipping at Balasore was afterwards abandoned. The first English vessel sailed directly up to Hugli in 1679—*Wilson's Annals* Vol. 1.

2. Letter dated April 25, 1636.

3. Shah Jehan on his accession to the throne had directed Casim Khan, the Subedar of Bengal, to capture the Portuguese settlement at Hugli which he did in September 1632.

Various motives for this act have been suggested. The Mahomedan Historians think that it was evoked by the many acts of oppression practised by the Portuguese, among the rest, their forcible conversion of Hindus and Mahomedans to Christianity.—*Elliot's History* Vol. VII pp, 31, 42 and 212. According to Manucci it was Mumtaz Mahal who, prompted by a proselytizing spirit instigated this measure.—*Irvine's Manucci* Vol. I p. 182.

But the real reason was probably that Shah Jehan wanted to revenge himself upon the Portuguese for having refused with insult to help him when he had come to Bengal, a rebel and a fugitive.

The motive that led him to restore them to favour within a few months of their expulsion is obscure. The Portuguese

had re-entered Hugli "to the number of twenty persons, hous cavidall (whose capital) for their commencing a new investment is the third part of their goods formerly cessed on, which with large privileges and *tashrafees* with honer (honour) the king hath bestowed upon them. So that our expectation of Hugli is frustrayt and I fear likewise Pippli will not (by us) be obtained, being a nancient randyvous (rendezvous) of theirs". So wrote Colley of Hariharpore to Cartwright at Balasore on July 17, 1633.

But for all this the English decided to make the venture. Captain Brookhaven had sailed up to Balasore in the *Lyoness* in 1650. Early next year four factors Bridgeman, Stephens, Taylor and Blake accompanied by their Hindu broker, Narayan, started from Balasore, sailed up the Hugli in a country junk and landed at Gholghat (which still retains the name) and laid the foundation of a factory between the Dutch settlement at Chinsurah and the Portuguese settlement at Bandel.

historians ascribe it to the profound impression which the miracles performed by Fra Jao de Cruz made upon the mind of the Emperor. The loss of trade and the consequent reduction of the Subedar's revenue might probably have weighed with him more. At any rate they were given 777 bighas of rent-free land with many commercial and religious privileges. They shifted their factory from Hugli to Bandel, a little outside the town.—*Campos : The Portuguese in Bengal, pp. 106 and 142.*

"Fra Jao was sentenced to be killed by a wild elephant which, however, instead of killing the priest bowed before him and taking him on his back marched to the Emperor's throne. The terror-stricken Emperor asked the holy man whatever he wanted. He desired permission on behalf of his country-men to return unmolested to Bandel. The Emperor granted the permission and provided funds to enable the Portuguese to return to Bandel. He further made over to them the absolute possession of 777 bighas of rent-free land in the village."

Bridgeman had been directed to proceed at once to Rajmahal where Sultan Shuja, the Viceroy of Bengal, was holding his Court and there with the help of the surgeon, Gabriel Boughton, who was high in favour with the Prince, to try and secure trading privileges¹.

1. Gabriel Bhughton is said to have procured a *farman* from Shah Jehan in 1634 as the reward of a cure he had effected in the Emperor's seraglio. The incident is described in Irvine's *Manucci Vol. I p. 219* and is assigned by Kafi Khan to the year 1643-44 and by the author of the *Badshanama* to 1644. Prof. J. N. Sarkar gives the date of the accident as March 1644. The Mahomedan historians ascribe the cure to a Mahomedan physician and Gabriel Boughton arrived at Surat in Sept. 1644.

As for Shuja's Nishan procured by Boughton as the reward of his cure in Shuja's seraglio, Stewart is wrong in giving 1640 as the date of the grant. We find in the instructions given by the Captain of the *Lyonesse* to the factors of Bengal that in 1651 Gabriel Boughton was still trying for it. The Nishan must have been obtained, if at all, some time in 1651-2. As the exact date is not known his instrumentality in procuring the Nishan cannot be conclusively refuted. He might have had a hand in it.

Gabriel Boughton arrived at Madras as the Surgeon of the *Hopewell* sometime in 1642; from there he went to Bantam the next year with the intention of returning home. The vessel in which he sailed was unable to complete her voyage and Boughton was left penniless at Surat in September 1644. He accepted service under Asalat Khan, a grandee of the Mogul Court, and went with him to Balkh in 1645. On the death of his patron in 1647 he entered the service of Shuja and came with him to Bengal. Like many other Englishmen of his time he married a native wife, a *Moghulani*, and carried on private trade in the name of the Company and perhaps with their money. He died at Rajmehal in 1652-3 but there is no tomb there to mark his place of burial. He was the part-owner of the "May Flower" which proved such a source of trouble to the Company and died heavily in debt to one Churmul, a shroff in Puttanah from whom" writes

This Gabriel Boughton has been made the hero of a romantic story by Stewart in his History of Bengal based upon a memorandum written in 1685 and entered at page 35 of Vol. XXX of Fort St. George's Records which has been accepted unchallenged by historians like Elphinstone, Wheeler and Hunter. The story had no foundation in fact and the astute surgeon of the Hopewell had not that stuff in him of which heroes of romances are supposed to be composed. So far from being moved by patriotism and readily placing the favour he enjoyed at Court at the disposal of his countrymen, he had to be bribed and bribed heavily before he exerted his influence on their behalf and he made a sorry return of their goodwill by carrying on private trade, much to the injury of the infant trade of the Company, probably with the Company's money and bequeathed a heavy legacy of debts he had incurred in the name of the Company as well as a claim for compensation for the confiscation of a ship engaged in not a very creditable venture, a claim for which his widow and her husbands pestered the Company for years.

Bridgeman went to Rajmahal to move the Viceroy for concessions. The way had been smoothed by the factors at Masulipatam having sent to Boughton a *peshkush* of "3 yards of scarlett cloth and 16 yards of gold and silver lace to make him a coat" and a preliminary present of some rarities to the Prince. This was

Waldegrave at Balasore in Aug, 1653, "we have received very many troublesome solicitacions for payment or securitie for that debt, he being then under the nocion of the Company's servant and did their business at Patna" His widow married first one William Pitt, a factor in the Bay and then, after his death, Richard Moseley, a dyer at Cossimbazar.

followed by a large sum of money to be laid out in presents to Shuja and his courtiers including Gabriel Boughton. Bridgeman had orders to spend "three thousand rupees at least to procure "the prince's *firm* *maund* for free trade without paying customes in his dominions". He obtained some concessions but what they were we do not know for there is no authentic copy extant of Shuja's Nishan of (1651-2)¹. It was lost by Waldegrave along with the Company's other papers and accounts in his overland journey to Madras from Balasore in (1653-4). Probably they amounted to only "a suspension of paying present customes" (*President at Surat to Company, January 18, 1654*). However on the strength of this Nishan of Shuja whatever its terms might have been, and the *farman* of Shah Jehan granted to Davidge at Agra "saving the Company thousands of rupees in *Rahadharees* (road dues)" a copy of which had been sent to the factors of Bengal, the English started business at Hugli with Bridgeman as the chief on £20, Stephens as the second on £10 and Taylor and Blake on £6 and £5 respectively.

The English must have opened trade with Bihar almost immediately after they had obtained a footing at Hugli. Their parting injunction had been not to lose sight of Patna and Petre. "Pattana being all sides concluded the best place for procuring petre" said Captain Brookhaven "desire you, therefore, to make a trial how

1. The copy given by Stewart in the Appendix of his History was found among the papers of Master. It was really made up from the rough notes of the original Nishan lost. It was fathered upon Thomas Billedge who is said to have obtained it in 1656. The glaring discrepancies in the story told about it prove it to be a myth—*Wilson's Annals Vol. 1. p. 28 notes.*

you can procure the same from thence wherein you can make use of W. B¹. who you know is able to inform you. In this commodity invest at least one half of your stock and endeavour refining of the same at Hukeley. In case you run into debt lett it be for this commodity yet I dare not advise you soe to do until you receive order from the Agent and the Council, the interest being as you know so exceeding high." Agent Greenhill in his letter dated January 14, 1652 followed up these instructions with earnest exhortations on the factors to imitate the Dutch and "sail up the river in boats to Patna for saltpetre, which is said to cost half so much at Pattana as at Ballasore." For this purpose, as the use of hired boats was inconvenient, a boat was purchased at Masulipatam for 120 pagodas, was named the *Transport* and sent to Hugli under William Bevis, Master. The Bay Factors sold it as unsuitable, built one for themselves and lost no time in carrying out the orders of the Agent. Early in 1652 they had evidently established a regular business at Patna and sent a factor there to look after it.

President Blackman at Surat wrote to the Company on May 12, 1654, "The expected *farman* clearing the consignments (of saltpetre) at Ahmedabad and Patna is not yet obtained, though the matter has been on hand over twelve months." Waldegrave at Balasore complained on Jany. 4 1654 "that the Company's saltpetre

I. W. B. was W. V. the friendly Dutchman referred to in several letters. His full name, Wilhelm Volger, was not given for obvious reason. Wilson's suggestion that it was William Blake is wrong. There is nothing on record to show that he had any previous experience of Bengal or Petre. If he had, the Company would not have put him lowest in the list of officers at Hugli and paid him the smallest salary. And it would also be absurd to take W. B. to stand for William Bevis' mentioned below.

was being forcibly detained at Patna." Both these complaints probably refer to the same incident, viz., the detention of saltpetre at Patna early in 1653. The matter-of-fact way in which the complaints were made seems to suggest that it was not the first instance of its kind, that the trade had been carried on for some time and that such detentions had occurred before. Gabriel Boughton before his death in 1652 or 1653 had been trading on his own account and incurring debts to "one Churmull, a shroff of Puttanah, between 5 and 6000 rupees with interest, from whence" writes Waldegrave on Aug 17, 1652, "we have often received very many troublesome solicitacions for payment or securitie for debt, hee (Boughton) being then under the nocion of being under Companie's servant and did their business at Puttanah that yeare." The English trade must, therefore, have been well established at Patna before Boughton's death. Lastly, William Jesson at Agra, wrote to the President and Council at Surat on March 2, 1652 that, after Davidge had obtained a *farman* from the Emperor freeing the English from *Rahadharees* or road-dues, a letter conveying this information had been "duly forwarded to Hugli and a copy "per bazzar conveyance to Patna where probably one of the factors would be found."

The factory established at Patna sometimes between 1651 and 1652 was not however officially recognized till February 1658, for the Company, after this advance northwards which seemed to exceed their feeble powers, were for sometime in a state of doubt and wavering as to whether they should retain these outlying agencies or withdraw them. The Bengal factory lay beyond the effective control of Madras. In spite of the pious exhortations of the Agent in Council, the factors of the Bay had plunged into irregularities. They carried on private trade

and neglected their masters' interests, incurred debts in the name of the Company and often misappropriated their money¹. Bridgeman and Blake² deserted the Company's service in 1653; Edward Stephens died at Cossimbazar much in debt about 1654 and Waldegrave in his overland journey to Madras managed to lose all Company's accounts and papers among which was the Nishan of Shuja and left India³. Besides the dishonesty of their servants, the Company had to face other difficulties. The inland trade on the Coromandel had become well-nigh impossible on account of the convulsed state of the

1. "Bridgeman not only borrowed money for his own purpose but made the Company responsible for its repayment, as will be seen from the enclosed letters"—*President at Surat to Company, Feb. 18, 1654*. He was referring to the *May Flower* affair.

All the factors held shares in the venture of the *Mayflower* and another vessel fitted out with the money borrowed on the security of the Company's funds and dispatched to Persia under Henry Cherry. Losing the monsoon, Cherry put into Goa and there became involved in a lawsuit with one of the passengers. By making use of the Company's name and giving himself out as acting for them he got free of the difficulties. When the Surat factory heard of the fraud and heavy liabilities incurred in their name they seized the belongings of the Bengal factors and directed their Persian agents to try and recover from Cherry the expenses they had been put to in connection with the affair at Goa. Cherry died intestate at Ispahan; the Persian agents of the Company realized the debts due to him and sold the *May Flower*. This led to a succession of claims against the Company. The last claimant was a Portuguese merchant who was clamouring for the satisfaction of his demand when Streynsham Master came to Bengal in 1676.

2. Blake was taken back into the service and became the chief at Hugli in 1663.

3. In the list of men on the Coast, 1654 "Powle Waldegrave" is described as "gone to Persia."

Vestiges of Old Madras Vol. I. p. 117.

country brought about by Shah Jehan's wars with Golconda and Bijapore. The coasting trade had become risky on account of the Dutch War. A rival company had been started by Cromwell in 1655. Thus harrassed on all sides the Madras Council "dispaired of the republic" and resolved to withdraw from Bengal. But the troubles fortunately proved only a summer cloud and quickly passed away. The Dutch War was brought to an end in 1654; the new Company was amalgamated with the old Company in 1657; the illness of Shah Jehan and the scramble for the throne of Delhi in 1657 left the affairs in the Deccan comparatively peaceful. And the Company changed their minds. They appointed a commission to inquire into the malpractices and disorders in Bengal and on their report inaugurated measures of reform¹. Private trade in those commodities in which the Company dealt was strictly forbidden; the service was reorganised and the salaries were improved. Hugli was made the Head Agency with subordinate agencies at Balasore, Cossimbazar and Patna and was placed under the direct control of Madras, the final authority resting with the President and Council at Surat, the chief seat of the Company's power in India. The Head Agency had a Chief and four members who formed his council. The Chief's salary was £100 and the four councillors were paid £40, £30, £20 and £20 respectively according to their position in the Council. Each subordinate agency had a factor and three assistants. The factor's pay was £40 and his assistants were paid £30, £20 and £20 respectively. This was the constitution laid down in the famous Court Dispatch of 12th January, 1658 which recognised the factory at Patna and appointed its factors and his assistants.

1. *Bruce's Annals Vol. I.*

CHAPTER VI.

THE CITY OF PATNA AND ITS GOVERNORS.

The city of Patna surpassed in importance the other factory towns of the Company in the Bay. It was the seat of the government of Bihar¹ and a great trade-centre.

Fitch had found it a great mart of "cotton and cloth of cotton, much sugar, very much opium and other commodities". Hughes and Parker had seen it full of "the Portugalls" come in their "frigatts from Collye and Pippulye" to trade in spices and silk stuff and the Mongols and Prachyas, "swarming like the bees, whose chiefest provisions were mandyle (turban cloth with gold thread), girdles, layches (elachis), doupattas from Maldah and camcanys from Beyhara". Manucci found it inhabited by many merchants who traded in white cloth of fine quality, and "bottles and cups of clay, finer than glass, lighter than paper and highly scented". Bernier and Tavernier found here traders even from the distant Tipperah.

Its appearance, however, was not very imposing. Ralph Fitch had visited it in 1583 and left a description of it in the accounts of his travels "as a very long and great town under a governor named Tipperdas²". Fitch's

1. It had been the capital of Bihar since the time of Sher Shah in 1541.

2. This "Tipperdas" was probably Rai Patar Das, the joint Dewan of Muzuffer Khan, Governor of Bengal and Bihar. Muzfer was killed in 1580 and was succeeded by Raja Todar Mull. Rai Pattar Das continued in his office and was probably posted in Bihar. It would not be surprising for Fitch to confound the Dewan with the Governor. *Tabakat-i-Akbari*. Elliot Vol. VI.

account was probably made the basis of Heylin's¹ description of it in his "Geographie and Cosmographie" as "a large town and a long one built with broad (?) streets but the houses very mean, poor, made at the best of earth and hurdles, thatched overhead". Heylin calls Satgaon the port of Patna, misled by the fact that it was the port of the Portuguese who came to trade at Patna from Hugli. Mannuci visited it in 1663 and Bernier and Tavernier in 1665 and their accounts, tally very nearly with Heylin's. "Patna is a large city" writes Manucci "with bazaars, the greater part thatched". "Patna" says Tavernier "is one of the largest towns in India on the margin of the Ganges, on its western side, not less than two *cos* in length. The houses are not better than in the majority of the other towns of India and they are nearly all roofed with thatch or bamboo". The appearance of the city had not much changed in the first half of the 18th century. In the "*Notes to Plaisted's³ Journal from Calcutta in Bengal to England (1740)*" Patna is described as one of the largest cities of India and seated on the southern side of the Ganges. but the houses are mean being covered with thatch and bamboo reeds and placed at a distance from each other. It is adorned with fine gardens, pagodas and other public structures as also towers and redoubts on the landside which serve more for ornament than use".⁴

1. Peter Heylin died in 1662. The book was published posthumously in 1686.—*Bengal Past and Present*. July, 1907.

2. Irvine's *Manucci* Vol. II p. 83 and Ball's *Tavernier* Vol. I. p. 121-2.

3. Bartholomew Plaisted was one of the Engineers employed in building Fort William. See Wilson's *Old Fort William in Bengal* Vol. I.

4. *Bengal Past and Present*, December, 1907.

The modern province of Behar may be roughly divided into North Behar, South Behar and Tirhut. These three units now combining, now disuniting, now in the possession of the King of Jaunpore, now under the sway of Bengal, sometimes independent, sometimes tributary, sometimes owning allegiance to Gaur, sometimes to Delhi, made up the history of the Province during the the early Mahomedan rule first brought into it and into Bengal by Md. (son of Baktiyar) Khilji, the Jagirdar Bhayili, and Bhagawat, two pergannas lying to the South of Benares and east of Chunar. It was a strange and a rather confusing dance they danced like the embryon atoms in Milton's Chaos, from 1204 to 1540, with the Rajas of Bhojepore and the Cheros of the Hill Tracts to join in it now and then and make confusion worse confounded.

The Mahomedan kingdom founded in Bengal gradually absorbed South Behar. North Behar was united to the Kingdom of Jaunpore in 1397, but it freed itself from that kingdom only to be welded to Bengal, after its overthrow in 1489 when the last king of Jaunpore sought an asylum and found it at Colgong. Tirhut long maintained its independence first under its Hindu Rajas, the last of whom was defeated and killed by Nasarat Shah¹ of Bengal in 1523 and then under their Mahomedan governors who continued to give trouble down to the middle of the 18th century. Under Sher Shah, the founder of the Sur Dynasty of the Emperors of Delhi all these three units were united for a time and the kingdom thus formed had its headquarters fixed at Patna in 1541.

Bengal and Behar were often united under powerful chiefs who were independent of the Sultan of Delhi merely paying him an occasional tribute which they would stop

1. According to Major Raverty in *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*.

on the first opportunity. If the Emperor were sufficiently powerful he would come down himself or send an army, win a battle or two, collect some tribute, obtain a promise of allegiance and then leave the country to lapse into its old condition. The Emperors found it necessary to rule Bengal and Behar with a loose rein. Once the son of an Emperor was sent down to govern Behar¹, on another occasion the father of the Emperor found himself in the unique position of the Sultan of Bengal and South Behar owing allegiance to his son, the Emperor of Delhi.² The tables were turned about the middle of 16th century when the governor of Bengal became the Emperor of Delhi. Farid Khan, the ambitious son of the Jagirdar of Sasseram and Tondah, taking advantage of the unsettled condition of the country, made himself the master first of Bihar and then of Bengal. Feeling himself sufficiently strong, he fought and overthrew the Emperor of Delhi, Humayun, took possession of the throne and for five years ruled ably and well under the name of Sher Shah.³ With him began a new era in the history of Bengal and Bihar. "The rule of the independent kings of Bengal and Bihar may be said to have come to an end at this date (1540); henceforth they became subject to the Emperors of Delhi." Not that there was no occasional revolts and flouting of the power of the Emperor but the principle of the overlordship of Delhi was hence-

1. Nasiruddin Khan, son of Altamas, was made the Governor of Bengal by his father; he was killed in 1227 A. D.

2. Nasiruddin Bogra Khan, the father of the Emperor Kaikobad (1288-1325).

3. He was killed while besieging the fortress of Kalinjar in 1545. See Charles XII.

"His fall was destined to a barren strand

"A petty fortress and an ignoble hand."

forth acknowledged as the rule¹. Sher Khan placed Bihar and Bengal under a faithful chief of the Kerani Afghans but divided it into a number of districts under separate governors with the learned Kazi Fasilat of Agra to act as the Genral Supervisor². This wise policy was abandoned by his successors with the effect that Soliman Kerani, the Governor of Bihar, made himself the master of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and though practically independent, pretended to hold them as a vassal of Akbar. His son Daud Khan who succeeded in 1573, defied the authority of the Emperor and began those dissensions and troubles, which, though they ceased to be formidable after the death of Osman, the last scion of the Pathan Dynasty of Bengal, continued to smoulder right down to the middle of the 18th centnry.

With a view to strengthen the hands of the Governor and enable him to cope successfully with the Afghans, Akbar placed the three provinces under one ruler who appointed a Deputy to represent him in each. Raja Man Singh's Deputy in Bihar was Said Khan. who, or rather his eunuch Wakil, Ikhtiyar Khan, is said to have built the Jama Masjid in Bihar. Jehangir on the recall of Man Singh revived the old policy of appointing separate governors for the three provinces though now and then Bengal and Orissa were placed under one Subedar. The policy of separate Governors was henceforth the rule, an occasional deviation being made only for a favourite of the Emperor or a prince of the Royal Family.

We have seen how the seat of the Government of Behar was shifted from Bihar to Patna in 1541. The capital of Bengal moved likewise from town to town from Lakhnauti to Gaur, from Gaur to Pandua, (1357) from

4. Stewart's *History of Bengal*.

5. *Tariki-Daudi*—Elliot. Vol. V

Pandua back again to Gaur (1392) from Gaur to Tanda (1563) from Tanda back again to Gaur (1574) which was finally deserted on account of a dreadful pestilence that broke out there in 1575 and the seat of Government was removed by Raja Man Singh to Agmahal which came to be named from that time forwards Rajmahal or Akbarnagar. Rajmahal was the capital of Bengal when the English first came to Bengal.

The Subedar of Bihar when Hughes and Parker came to Patna, was Moquarrab Khan, the whilome governor of Guzerat. He left Patna in 1621 when Prince Parvez, the second of the five sons of Jehangir obtained Bihar as his *jagir*. He was the first Moghul prince of royal blood who came to rule Bengal or Bihar but he was not the last. Several others, as we shall see, followed him which led Captain Hamilton to describe Patna "as the residence of the Prince of Bengal who is *always* of the blood royal".¹

Prince Parvez ruled Bihar by his deputy, Muchlis Khan, who had been the Dewan and Bakshi of Bengal. Muchlis Khan fled on the approach of Shah Jehan who had revolted against his father and after having conquered Orissa and Bengal entered Bihar in 1624. But Prince Parvez and Mahabat Khan soon came after him and Shah Jehan had to flee into the Deccan (1626). When the rebellion was put down, Prince Parvez who had built the "*Sangi Masjid*" at Patna, made over the government of Bihar to Mahabat Khan and his son and left for Delhi. But neither Mahabat nor his son liked to live away from Delhi, so Rustam Khan Soofi was made the governor of Bihar.²

1. *A new Account of the East Indies*. Chap. xxiv.

2. *Ikhla nama-i-Jahangiri*, Elliot Vol. VI, p. 417. *Riyazus-Salatin* and Stewarts' *Bengal*. This Rustam Khan was a native of northern Persia. He died at Samugarh—Irvine's *Manucci Vol I. p. 225-0*.

On the accession of Shah Jehan to the throne of Delhi in 1628, Cossim Khan was made the Governor of Bengal and Alum Khan of Bihar.¹ Cossim Khan took Hugli from the Portuguese and made it the Moghul port. Its Fouzdar was made independent of the Governor of Bengal. The public offices were withdrawn from Satgaon and the Port Piquero of the Portuguese losing its importance declined into insignificance and obscurity.

In 1637 on account of the rebellion of the Rajah of Bhojepore, Shah Jehan sent down his favorite general Abdullah Khan and made him the Governor of Bihar. But as he proved an oppressive ruler he was recalled and Saista Khan was appointed to succeed him (1639). The same year Islam Khan who had succeeded Cossim Khan whose death had occurred shortly after the capture of Hugli was recalled on a similar charge of oppression and the Emperor's second son, Prince Shuja, was appointed in his place. Shuja ruled Bengal, with a short break, from 1639 to 1659 when he was driven out of Bengal to perish miserably in Arracan. It was when he was the Viceroy that the English founded their factory at Hugli.

Saista Khan was the governor of Bihar from 1639 to 1649 when he succeeded Aurungzeb as the Governor of Guzerat. Sadulla Khan² the Vizier, had then the Jagir of Bihar conferred upon him and he governed it by his deputy till his death in 1656 when it was transferred to Sipar Sheko, the grandson of the Emperor. Sipar's deputy was Bahadur Khan.³ In the last year of Shah Jehan's reign, when the scramble for the throne began, Alawardi Khan⁴ was the governor of Bihar.

1. Dow's *Hindusthan* Vol. III. p. 121.

2. Dow's *Hindustan* III p. 204.

3. Dow's *Hindustan* III p. 204—Irvine's *Manucci* Vol. I p. 210 n.

4. J. N. Sarkar's *Aurungzeb* Vol. III p. 246.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ENGLISH IN BIHAR.

We have seen how the English made their way into Bihar immediately after their settlement in Bengal (1650) though the factory was first officially recognized in 1658 and how they carried on their trade on the authority of the concessions granted by Shah Jehan to Davidge at Delhi in 1651 freeing them from the road-dues. The *farman* of 1634 was of doubtful authenticity and the *Nishan* of Shuja, even if obtained so early, was not of any use to them in Bihar for Shuja was the Governor of Bengal and Orissa and not of Bihar though he seems to have always coveted it.¹ They had therefore to practise in Bihar the same tactics as in Bengal for concessions and make costly presents to the Nabob and his officers. Saista Khan was not the man to overlook any opportunity for filling his coffers. *Nishans* and *farmans* were no great helps. Mr. Money was the most influential man and like Hughes and Parker, the Bihar factors had often to appeal to him. Saltpetre boats were frequently stopped "notwithstanding those costly *phirmaunds* and *nishans* procured and commands to the contrary"² and the best way to avoid the difficulty was not to procure an imperial order which would take more than a year to negotiate but to make presents to the officials concerned. "To secure its release" wrote

1. "As you have often before begged the Emperor Shah Jehan for the Province of Bihar, I now add it to your vice-royalty".

Aurungzeb's letter to Shuja. Prof. Sarkar's *Aurungzeb Vol. II* p. 137-8.

2. *President Blackman to Company, May 12, 1654.*

Waldegrave and Stephens at Balasore to the Company on Decr. 28, 1654 referring to a detention of petre boats at Rajmahal "and for future negotiating, it is most requisite that considerable and valuable presents be provided for the Prince (Shuja at Rajmahal) and other great men yearly, specially as the Dutch give largely."

The chief articles sent to Patna were broadcloth, lead and quicksilver and the most important commodity imported therefrom was saltpetre.¹ The factors at Hugli had been instructed to invest half their capital in saltpetre and the other half in silk, sugar and cloth.² The goods were carried up and down the Ganges at first in hired country boats, but this arrangement proved inconvenient. Sometimes would the boatmen become mutinous, demand exorbitant wages instigated thereto by the local officials or desert with the Company's money. In February 1651 they bought a light-draft vessel at Masulipatam and sent it to Hugli, but the factors found it unsuitable and so sold it and made one themselves.³ This was the humble beginning of the fine

1. John Kenn, the chief at Cossimbazar from 1658-1665 in a note dated 1661 gives a list of the "commodities procurable at Patna.

- (1) Musk and drugs of all sorts from Bhutan.
- (2) Turmeric.
- (3) Tinkall (Borax)
- (4) Gumlack or sticklac.
- (5) Taffetas, Amberties, Sashes, Elachis.

In all these commodities the English dealt after they had been in Bihar for some time but not to the same extent as saltpetre,—Wilson's *Annals Vol. I. pp. 378-9.*

2. *Consultation at Masulipatam—Feb. 19, 1651.* Also Capt Brookhaven's letter to the Factors quoted above.

3. *Agent Greenhill to the Company—Jany. 1652.*

fleet of saltpetre boats described by Captain Hamilton.¹ Saltpetre obtained in Patna was at first sent home raw "for want of suitable copper and pans" for refining it. This added considerably to the charges for freight and custom. The Madras Factory, therefore, wrote to Surat for some pans from Assada (in Africa) used there for boiling sugar. When these were obtained and "the great earthen pans" which caused so much inconvenience were dispensed with, "the curing of Petre" was done at Hugli, but after the establishment of a factory in Bihar the refining was naturally done on the spot where it was obtained in abundance.² The Dutch had a refinery at Choupar (Chapra); the English did their refining at Singhee and Naunagar though on account of the pressing demand it was occasionally sent down "white and brown" both. It was then stored in the huge warehouses at Hugli which Manucci saw and wondered at. From Hugli the goods were taken down in boats to Balasore where they were laden in ships sailing to England. This was a tedious and expensive process and it was felt that it would be a decided improvement if ships could sail up the Ganges right up to the factory. As a preparation for this the Bengal Pilot Service was inaugurated in 1668³ entertaining apprentices for seven years and training them up in the accurate knowledge of the navigation and topography of the Hugli. It was in 1679 that

1. They are "above 50 yds. long and 5 broad and 2½ yds. deep and can carry 200 tons. They come down in the month of October before the stream of the river but are obliged to tack them up again with strength of hand about 1000 miles"—*New Account of the East Indies*, Chap. xxiv.

2. Before the establishment of the Hugli factory the refining had been done at Masulipatam and Madras. *Walter Littleton to Company. Jany. 17, 1631.*

3. Bruce's *Annals* Vol. II p. 206—Stewart's *History* p. 301.

the first British ship, the *Falcon*, under Captain Stafford sailed up the Ganges to Garden Reach and thence to Hugli.¹

The English had no house at Patna and the chief did not ordinarily live there.² It was no wonder, therefore, that Manucci did not see any Englishman at Patna on his way to Hugli in 1663 though on his return journey overland he was more fortunate. He halted at Patna several days "spending a jolly time with some English and Dutch friends." It might be said that the Indianized Italian thought Cojah Safar, the Armenian merchant, and Daud Khan, the Governor, more congenial company and was not very anxious to meet Europeans. But the same thing happened to Bernier and Tavernier when they visited Patna in December 1665. They saw no Englishmen but met some Dutchmen in the streets of Patna "who were returning from *Choupar*, 10 cos above Patna and who halted their carriage to salute the travellers, and they did not separate till they had emptied two bottles of Shiraz in the open street."

"The Honorable Companie" says John Marshall⁴ "had no factorie at Patna but what hire, nor doth the chief

1. Hedges, *Diary III* 200—Wilson's *Annals* pp. 47 and 59.

2. The obscurity of the whereabouts of Factors at the Bay, particularly of one who had been sent into the interior, is indicated in the following entry in the "List of men on the Coast, 1654"

"At Hukely and Bengala—James Bridgman and William Netlam, (*God knows where*) William Blake and two others".

Love's Vestiges of Old Madras Vol. I. page 117. Later on they had a hired house at Patna.

3. *Irvine's Manucci Vol. II p. 96.*

4. *Accompt of Patana by J. Marshall.* Streynsham Master's *Diaries Vol. II p. 89* and also his *Notes and observations of East Indies* (1669). Marshall was at Patna from 1669 to 1671.

usuall reside there by reason the Nabob's Pallace is in the city and his servants and officers are constantly craving one thing or another, which if not given, though they have not what they desire, yet they are not satisfied therewith but create trouble and if given what they desire will be very chargeable." So the chief rented a house at Hogeepore (Hajipur) on the opposite side of the river for which he paid $3\frac{1}{2}$ Rs. per month. From thence, south-easterly about 4 cos, was Naunagar where the Company had a house of their own and about 10 or 12 miles north of Patna, *extra Gangem*, was Singhee¹, where they had a factory. The factors lived at Singhee which was a pleasant but not a "wholesome place," in order to be near the saltpetre men and salt-petre grounds. At Naunagar they kept only a banian (a native agent) and "sometimes only peons to receive the petre from the petremen which lyes thereabouts to avoid carrying to Singhee which would be chargeable."

The life led by the English at Patna must have been substantially the same, making allowance for a difference in the surroundings, as that of the factors at the other settlements in India, like that at Surat, for instance, as depicted by Mandelso, De la Valle and Ovington or in Bengal as described by Streynshan Master and Hedges.

The houses of the English were poor, merely "thatched hovels"² which contrasted unfavourably with the well-built houses of the Dutch. They must have

1. Singhee is modern Singhiya near Lalganj on the left hand of the River Gandak.—Hunter's *Gazetteer*. Naunagar has not been identified.

2. The superiority of the Dutch in this respect was also noticed by Tavernier at Dacca "The Dutch had good houses, the English houses being reasonably good."

been specially miserable at Patna where they lived in hired houses.

In dress they imitated the European changes of mode though, of course, at a respectful distance. The costume of the 17th century, large hose, peasecod-bellied doublet, short cloak or mantle with standing collar, muffs that were, says Stubbs, of twelve, yea, sixteen lengths a piece set three or four times double, and conical crowned hats of velvet or taffeta ornamented with great bunches of feathers,—was peculiarly cumbersome and oppressive in a tropical climate. Perukes were not probably brought to India till long after its introduction in England by Charles II and men wore their long, flowing cavalier locks¹. But in time the English came to feel and understand the necessity of adapting their dress to the climate and environment. Many like Job Charnock² cut their hair short “to enter into the Moor’s fashion” and adopted the light and airy clothing of the Mahomedan noblemen. Pomp and display however over-rode comfort and economy. Even the youngest “writer”, notwithstanding his poor salary, would imitate the Oriental grandee in the matter of retinue, palanquin and umbrella, which last soon became such a positive nuisance that Streynsham Master had to rule at Muslipatam—an order afterwards enforced in Bengal—that “no persons shall have a roundell (Umbrella) carried over them but such as are of the Councill and the Chaplaine³.” The privilege of riding in a palanquin was at

1. *The English in Western India* p. 22.

2. See *Infra*.

3. Master’s *Diaries Vol. I* p. 295. The order however was indifferently obeyed for says Yule “This affair of the roundell continued to afford a crow to pluck with the youngmen till the middle of the next century.” *Hedges. Diary Vol. II* p. 232.

first confined only to the chief and the second but it came to be encroached upon by the junior writers who resorted to it with such a baneful effect upon their purse that the Court was forced to forbid its use, on pain of instant dismissal from office, except in the hot and rainy season.¹

The salaries being very small², quite inadequate for keeping up the state in which they lived, the Company's servants carried on trade on their own account under the shelter of the Company's name and occasionally with the Company's money which was often misappropriated. Private trade was connived at and embezzlement was not regarded as a serious offence for many a servant of the Company whose guilt had been admitted or proved and who had been rightly cashiered was afterwards restored to his old position and even rewarded with promotion.

Life in the factory was free and easy inspite of the attempts of the authorities to regulate it "after the fashion

The "Kittesan boys" were found to be an inseparable appendage of an Englishman out of doors even in the days of Warren Hastings. See *Hartly House* p. 9. *Kittesan* is a corruption of the Portuguese *Quitassol*—bar-sun i. e. an umbrella.

1. *Court Letter* dated the 23rd Jany. 1754. *Long's Selections* Nos. 141 and 361.

2. When a regular civil service was introduced in 1676, apprentices had to serve for 7 years receiving £5 a year for the first 5 years and £10 a year for the last two. When the apprenticeship was over they become *writers* on £15, and after a year's service "Factors" or "Junior merchants" on £20. The next grade above this was that of the "Senior merchants" on £40. The pay of the Agent was at first £100. It was afterwards raised to £200 with a gratuity of £100. The Chaplain's pay was £100 and that of the Surgeon £72 *Wilson's Annals Vol. II* p. 83 "List of salaries paid to the convened servants in 1712".

of a College¹." They worked for three hours in the forenoon from nine to twelve, then had their midday meal after which they retired for their *siesta* or noonday nap. In busy seasons they had to work also in the afternoon. Pleasures or amusements properly so called there were few or none, but there were hard drinking and much gambling. Bouleponge² (punch) arrack helped by the climate ruined many a fine health and brought many a youngman to a premature grave. In the matter of drink the Englishmen of those days showed a truly cosmopolitan taste. "Shiraz wine and punch, Europe wines and arrack" nothing came amiss to them. The factory of Bencoolen (20 persons) were reprimanded by the President at Surat for drinking 74 dozen bottles of wine and 24 doz. bottles of Burton's ale in one month. Agent Greenhill died of having "infustiated his corpus magnum with an overplus of beverage"³ Drugs were no good for sickness brought on by intemperance. "We doe hold" wrote the President at Surat to the Company "that instead of drugs it were safest for an Englishman to Indianize, so conforming himself in some measure to the diets of the country"⁴. But there were few listeners to

1. *Wilson's Annals Vol. 1*. Letter from Surat to Company dated 1671 quoted in *Prof. Das Gupta's India in the 17th Century*.

2. "Bouleponge is a drink composed of Arrack, a Spirit distilled from molasses, mixed with lemon juice, water and nutmeg ; it is pleasant enough to the taste but most hurtful to body and health". Constable's *Bernier p. 141*.

Mandelso calls it *Palepunts* and describes it as a drink "consisting of Aqua Vitae, rose-water, juice of citrons and sugar." Spices were not mentioned as they were always used in Indian drinks.

3. William Johnson to James Pickering. *Vestiges of Old Madras Vol. I p. 172*.

4. April 28, 1636. *Foster's Factory Records*.

this sound advice. For years the history of the factory, like "Brandy Nan's" was "all a drunken story." For years fine youngmen came out to India merely to swell the Indian graveyard or to return home feeble-bodied, bad-livered yellow-complexioned prematurely old men, mere wrecks of manhood.

Gambling was another vice prevalent among the factors—"a failing" says Hunter "comon in all times to bachelor groups of Englishmen from the East to the Far West"¹. The Company commanded that all who indulged in games of chance should be sent home. It was made punishable in 1695 in Madras with a fine of 25 pagodas for each offence². But still the "itch of gambling spread and infected even the women"³. The Company on the whole seemed not to have been very severe upon this vice. "We do not intend thereby" they wrote, "to hinder their diversion but the excess and to prevent the ill consequences of it"⁴. Afterwards they allowed gambling up to £10 and they did not include it in their "Ten Commandments"⁵. It seemed to have been less prevalent in Bengal than in Madras and Bombay for neither Master nor Hedges complained of it and when in 1748 the Company censured it as practised by some of the junior servants the Governor made an indignant protest and assured them that "had they ever observed the least appearance of this vice they should have suppressed it in its infancy"⁶.

1. *Hunter Vol. II p. 157.*

2. *Vestiges of Old Madras Vol. II p. 62.*

3. *Vestiges of Old Madras Vol. II p. 38.*

4. *Idem p. 249.*

5. *See Infra.*

6. *Long's Selections p. 23.*

As an inevitable consequence of drinking, gambling and Mammon worship there was quarrelling, bitter and disgraceful. The annals of the agencies are disfigured by references to unseemly brawls which not infrequently ended in blows, mutinies and even civil wars. In Madras the quarrel led to bloodshed, usurpation and a mild form of civil war to suppress which the Company had to send down five ships of war and five companies of soldiers.¹ At Hugli the charges and counter-charges brought by one member of the Council against another or against the chief², cases of assault³ that cost the Company large sums of money to compose, fill page after page of the Consultation Books of Fort St. George. The affairs in Bombay and Surat were hardly better. No fewer than twenty charges were brought against the Deputy Governor Young in 1669 and the Commandant Keigwin mutinied in 1676⁴.

1. The Winter-Foxcraft affair. *Wilson Vol I; Vestiges of Old Madras Vol. I, Chaps xviii, xix and xx.*

2. "The endless debates and mutual aspersions in and from the Bay between the chief and the factors there"—among Clavel, Vincent, Hall and Smith—"the feuds having now continued for years" the Company sent Master for inquiry and took drastic measures on his report.—*Consultation Book, Fort St. George, 1st. Feby. 1674/5. Master's Diaries Vol. I.*

These squabbles of Messrs. Smith and Hall and Vincent were reproduced in the Council Chamber of Warren Hastings a century later.

3. Joseph Hall assaulted Nurse "beat him with a cane and broke his head" (1674)

Even so late as 1763 we find how Councillor Batson slapped Warren Hasting's face in the Council Chamber. Hasting's duel with Sir Philip Francis was only a more honorable form of "assault".

4. *Anderson's The English in Western India.*

But the Patna factory seems to have been comparatively free from these unseemly squabbles. The Consultation Books of Fort St. George do not contain many references to them. It was either because the Patna factors were wiser in their generation and washed their dirty linens within the factory or that their chiefs were like Job Charnock, who, though a truculent subordinate, was a strong and tactful chief and kept a tight hand upon his assistants so that if the second or the third bore any grudge to his chief he had to keep his feelings to himself till he left Patna and then he might vent his malice by publishing scandalous reports about his enemy¹.

The Company were anxious for their own sakes as well as for their servants, that the factors should lead moral and godly lives. The Court Committee had caused a set of directions to be drawn up in 1667 and copies of them had been forwarded to St. George and Hugli with the following preface :—"We understanding of the unchristianlike and disorderly practices of some

"There were many occasions" Says Hunter "on which the 3rd Article of Hon'ble Company's Laws for the preservation of peace and suppression of mutiny, sedition and rebellion, had to be enforced". *History of British India Vol. II p. 202. n.*

See also "Recapitulation of mutinies in the Company's Settlements. From a report to the king by a secret Committee at India House, in connection with the Revolt at Bombay 15th Aug. 1684". "One at Fort St. George, three at St. Helena, three at Bombay"—*Hedges. Vol. III cclvii.*

1. John Smith the second at Patna in 1668 and Allen Catchpole the 4th in 1677 bore no good feelings to Job Charnock. Catchpole who had to leave Patna contended himself with whispering scandals in the ears of President Hedges at Hugli.—*Diary Vol. I p. 87.*

of our people and being desirous to reform the same to the glory of God, the credit of our Christian professions, the good and welfare of our servants, as well as our advantage, have therefore agreed upon Rules and Orders, which we herewith send you, which we require to be strictly and duely observed by all persons in our severall factories." These admonitions had, however, very little effect and Streynshan Master's attempt "to make them something more than a dead letter" by ordering that printed copies of these "Ten Commandments of the Company", as they had come to be called", should be put up in the hall and carefully observed" was not crowned with much success¹.

Religion was no higher than morals. In spite of the strict injunction upon the servants of the Company to attend morning and evening prayers, the Company had often to complain of their ungodly lives. There was a chaplain attached to each agency but unfortunately many of these chaplains like the "merchandising parson", John Evans,² thought more of making money than of saving souls. The English clergymen, however, were not prompted by the proselytizing spirit of the Portuguese Fathers, "though there were not wanting pious christians

1. "References to these directions are numerous but no complete copy of them appears to exist"—*Temple's Introduction to Master's Diaries Vol. I p. 9.*

They adjured the Servants of the Company "to abandon lying, swearing, cursing, drunkenness, uncleanness, profanation of the Lord's Day and all other sinful practices and not to be out of the house or from their lodgings late at night or absent from or neglect, morning or evening prayer, or do any other thing to the dishonour of Almighty God, the corruption of good manners or against the peace of Government"—*Wilson's Annals Vol. I p. 68.*

2. Friend of Job Charnock ; afterwards Bishop of Bangor.

among the Company's servants who looked upon the country with hopefulness and interest".¹

The number of European ladies was very small and many servants of the Company like Job Charnock, found wives among the women of the country and they generally did not belong to the higher classes of their society. These women if they failed to refine, soften and humanize their husbands, did a good deal to Indianize them. Whether Job Charnock did really sacrifice a cock to the manes of his wife or not, many in his situation had lost their horror for pagan rites. Many had contracted the evil habit of laziness and most took to hooka smoking. This habit, whether good or bad, took a firm root among the Bengal factors, became the prevalent mode and continued to be so right down to the time of Warren Hastings and lingered even later. "After dinner when the cloth is taken away" writes the Dutch traveller Stavornius"² a hooka which is a glass filled with water through which the smoke of the tobacco is drawn ...was set before every one of the Company." A

1. *Anderson's The English in Western India* p. 25.

2. *Stavornius's Voyages* Vol. I p. 145.

Miss Goldsborough gives a fine picture of the smoking apparatus. "The bell filled with rose-water ; and instead of odious tobacco, a preparation of betel-root rolled up and wetted, was placed in the bole, (it was a country-born *Lady* that was smoking ; a *gentleman* would of course use a more heroic ingredient) which bole was beautiful Chinaware covered with a filligree silver cup, with a mouthpiece of the same material". Then she describes the snake, the long-ornamented tube, and the graceful manner in which it twined through the rails of the chair and "was borne under the arm of the smoker so as not incommode any person seated near".—*Hartly House Letter III.*

"hookabardar" was the shadow of a gentleman following him wherever he went.¹

The picture here drawn is certainly dark and decidedly unpleasant. But it was small blame to the poor factor that his life was no better and no sweeter. It was the inevitable result of the atmosphere he breathed, the forces that operated on him and the circumstances under which he lived. A half-educated callow youngman, exiled from home, placed beyond the restraints of his society, beset with temptations, enervated by a tropical climate, living in the midst of surroundings that reeked with the rank corruption of an empire in a state of dissolution, with money-making as the sole ideal of life and without lawful means to attain his aim, what else could he prove but what he became? It was fortunate, however, that the adverse forces could not completely kill all the good that was in him, that they left behind some virtues as redeeming features. There yet lingered among the factors traces of remarkable ability, love of justice and fair play and an unflinching love of truth. "Never" says the Court in 1693 "never any native

1. The *Hookerbearer*, a prominent figure in a gentleman's suite of servants, was as great a personage, if not greater than, a *Consumer* (*Khansamah*). He accompanied his master wherever he went. Mr. & Mrs. Warren Hastings inviting their friends in October 1779 to a concert and supper begged that no servants be brought "except a *hookcabardar*."

The habit which in time extended even to the ladies (other than country born) died hard. "In 1840 a hooka was still very common at Calcutta dinner table", says *Grandpré*. "A civilian High Court Judge" write Hobson and Jobson "who died in 1873 enjoyed the distinction of having been the last of the old brigade of "Qui Hais" to smoke his *hooka* regularly in the Bengal Club". —See also Blechynden's *Calcutta Past and Present* p. 127.

of India lost a penny debt by this Company from the time of the first institution thereof in queen Elizabeth's day till this time."¹ Umichand was voicing the common belief and not merely using the language of diplomacy, though his utterance was fraught with a grim dramatic irony, when he wrote to the Nabob in 1757 "that he had lived forty years under the protection of the English and never known them once to be guilty of breaking their word."

1. *Hedges. III p. 17.*

CHAPTER III.

THE ENGLISH FACTORY AT PATNA. THE POLITICAL CONVULSIONS.

We have seen how the factory at Patna was officially recognised in 1658. The personnel of the staff was as follows :

Richard Chamberlayne,	Chief on £40.
Roger Seymour	Second „ £30
William Vassel	Third „ £20
Francis Farrier	Fourth „ £20

But the time of inauguration was anything but auspicious. The whole country was in a state of confusion. Shah Jehan had fallen ill and each of his four sons, Governor of a great province, made a bold dash for the throne. Shuja, the second son, was the Governor of Bengal and Orissa. On hearing of the illness of his father, he had himself crowned king at Rajmahal and marched to Patna, where Alawardi Khan the Governor of Bihar joined his standard. Thus reinforced he marched to Bahadurpore five miles north-east of Benares. Here his camp was surprised by Soliman Sukho, the son of Dara, the eldest son of the Emperor. Shuja beat a precipitate retreat to Patna and thence to Monghyr closely followed by Soliman. At Monghyr Soliman, on receipt of the news of the defeat of his father by Aurungzab, patched up a hasty peace and returned to Delhi (May 1658).

Aurungzeb outwitted and outmanœuvred his other two brothers and seized the throne. He wrote a conciliatory letter to Shuja and offered him the province of Bihar in addition to his other Subahs. Shujah seemed

content but was not so ; he merely bided his time and waited for an opportunity to strike at Aurungzeb. Such an opportunity soon came. Aurungzeb had to go to the Punjab in pursuit of Dara. Shuja thought it was now time for him to surprise Agra. He marched to Patna and thence to Allahabad and Khajua where he met the imperial army. He was defeated and forced to flee with Mir Jumla and Prince Mahomed in hot pursuit. He retreated to Patna where he stopped for a few days but hearing of the advance of the enemy left the city and was forced to fall back step by step from Patna to Monghyr, from Monghyr to Shahebgunj and Rajmahal and thence through Murshidabad to Dacca where finding all hope gone he sought shelter with the king of Arracan where he perished miserably with his whole family about 1661¹.

Alawardi Khan the Governor of Bihar, who had been made his chief adviser was detected in a conspiracy against his new ally at Rajmahal and he and his son were executed. On Alawadi Khan's defection, Daud Khan Quarishi had been appointed Governor of Bihar and he ruled the province till 1665. The only important incident during his administration was the conquest of Palamau in 1662. The Chero chief of Palamau, the northern frontier of which was only 50 miles from Patna, had been defeated by Saista Khan and had agreed to pay a tribute which was never actually paid. Daud Khan led an expedition into the country, captured the forts and brought the people under the Moghul sway.

It was an exciting time in Bihar from 1657-1665, With armies marching up and down and occasionally quartering themselves in the town, the people of Patna

and the adjoining districts were kept in a feverish state of alarm and anxiety. Mr. Chamberlayne and his assistants must have had a particularly painful time of it had they been there before 1659. Probably they were not. From a letter written by Henry Aldworth to Thomas Davies¹ and dated February 1659 we learn that Chamberlayne was in 1659 at Rajmehal *en route* to Patna. The factors must have been waiting there to let the troubles blow over before they started regular business.

There were certain changes in the personnel of the staff of the factory almost immediately after the list had been made out. The "Second," Roger Seymour, left for Vivasaram and William Vassel was promoted to his place. Samuel Baylie was appointed the third and Henry Aldworth, the fourth². There must have been some further changes in the staff as the factors were waiting at Rajmahal. We know from Henry Aldworth's letter referred to above that Job Charnock was accompanying Chamberlayne. We find also from certain other letters that Pickering³ who had been posted at Cossimbazar was also with them. So that it is not impossible that Charnock and Pickering had taken the places of two of the members of the staff "fallen off", and were among the Dutch and English factors at Patna with whom "the Pepys of India" had a merry drinking bout on his way back from Hugli.

1. Henry Aldworth was appointed in the place of Francis Farrier, the 4th at Patna, he having "fallen off." *Court Minutes* Jan'y. 27, 1658.

2. *Court Minutes* March 17, 1668.

3. Pickering³ at the Bay was recommended for appointment. *Court Minutes* March 17, 1658.

William Johnson to James Pickering at Patna, dated 4th Jan'y 1659.

When the political troubles had calmed down and some sort of order had even restored in the country the English in Bengal were faced with other difficulties which always cropped up whenever there was a change of Governors. The new rulers refused to acknowledge the grants of their predecessors. The Fouzdar at Hugli demanded an annual payment of 3000/ rupees in lieu of custom.¹ The Governor of Orissa made exorbitant charges for anchorage at Balasore and Mir Jumla who had succeeded Shuja as the Subadar of Bengal seized at Rajmahal the Company's saltpetre boats coming down from Patna and refused to release them till compensations were made to him for his junk seized by Greenhill, the Madras Agent, when Mir Jumla was in the service of the king of Golconda.² When remonstrances failed the Agent at Hugli retaliated by seizing a country boat belonging to Mir Jumla. The Subadar demanded immediate reparation and threatened to destroy the out-agencies and expel the English from the country. Trevissa, the Agent at Hugli, wrote to Madras for instructions. He was advised to submit, which he did and was forgiven. The English were allowed to trade again on payment of Rs. 3000/ as yearly *peshkash*. On account of these troubles the English had decided to withdraw their out agencies and confine the Bengal trade to Hugli. But the subsequent lenient attitude

Vestiges of Old Madras Vol. I, p. 172.

A few months later another letter was addressed to Pickering at Patna by the same correspondent—*Vestiges Vol. I, p. 174* Also, Interloper Dorrell's letter to Pickering, *Hedges Vol. II.*

1. *Stewart's History* page 181.

Wilson's Annals Vol. I.

2. *Vestiges of Old Madras Vol II.*

of Mir Jumla probably made them change their mind. Mir Jumla was a strong man and like all strong men, was not a petty, meddlesome tyrant. After the incident referred to above he left the English in peace to carry on their trade.

Mir Jumla shifted the capital of Bengal from Rajmahal to Dacca, But Rajmahal still continued to retain its importance in the eyes of the English for it was by Rajmahal that the saltpetre boats from Patna had to pass on their way to Hugli and the Daroga or Fouzdar could, if he pleased, cause them much trouble. Then there was a mint at Rajmahal¹ and the Company had to send here their bullion to be coined into the current coins of the country to look after which they generally kept one of their servants there.

Mir Jumla died in 1663 and was succeeded by Saista Khan, formerly the Governor of Bihar. He left Bengal in 1677 to take up the governorship of Agra but was reappointed Subedar of Bengal in 1679 and continued to hold that office till 1689 when he resigned on account of old age and died seven years later in 1696.

Saista Khan was a great general and an able administrator and his rule in Bengal was long remembered as one of the most prosperous under the Moghul Emperors. But he was exceedingly avaricious and he regarded the English with no very favourable eye. They were subjected to innumerable worries in Bengal during his administration.

1. In Murshid Kuli's time there was a mint at Murshidabad. In Aliverdi's time on a joint petition made by the Dutch, French and English traders the Company received permission to have a mint at Calcutta, which however did not become an accomplished fact till after Mir Jaffer's succession to the throne.

Saista Khan had obtained Hugli as his *Jaigir*. So long as it had been governed by the Fouzdar, who had been, ever since its capture by Cossim Khan, independent of the Governor of Bengal, "justice was more exactly administered and complaints made against the King's officers took place particularly in the favour of the strangers." But now the servants of Saista Khan "being made so far governors as to receive all the rents, profits, perquisites, customes, fines, etc. of the place the King's Governor hath little more than the name and for the most part sits still whilst the Nabob's officers oppress the people, monopolise most commodities even as low as grass for beasts, canes, firewood, thatch etc. nor doe they want ways to oppress the people of all sorts who trade, whether natives or strangers, since whatever they doe when complained of to Dacca is palliated under the name and color of the Nabob." By dint of presents and *peshkash*, however, the avaricious Nabob was brought to a more favourable frame of mind. In 1668 he gave the English permission to start the factory at Dacca and inaugurate a pilot service on the Hugli and in 1672 passed an order confirming the right of free trade on payment of a yearly sum of Rs. 3000 and warned the local officers of Bihar and Orissa, the Chancellor Waris Khan and Nabob Ruffee Khan "that whatsoever goods the Company should import from Balasore or any other place on the sea side to Hugli, Cossimbazaar, Patna or any other place as also saltpetre or any other goods they should export from Patna or any other place to any port should be allowed to pass without let or hinderance," But his avarice made him soon break his plighted word and he went on blackmailing the merchants and extorting presents from them till the English were forced to threaten that unless oppression

ceased they would entirely withdraw from Bengal and make a big hole in the King's Treasury¹. Matters were in this pass when in 1677 Saista Khan was transferred to Agra. He left Bengal one of the richest men in India, "his treasure being computed by knowing persons at 68 crores of rupees and his daily income at 2 lacs"², and he was the happy possessor of the pear shaped American pearl sold to him by Tavernier in 1684³.

But the troubles did not cease with the departure of Saista Khan. His successor Fedai Khan⁴ died within a year of his appointment but lived long enough to cause much vexation to the English "notwithstanding their 7000 Rs. at his entrance."⁵ After his death Haji Soofi, the Dewan who acted as the Governor set at naught the *parwanah* of Saista Khan and demanded 3½ p. c. custom on their commerce as at Surat.⁶ In August 1678 Prince Azam was appointed Governor of Bengal and the English expected great things at his hands only because the Patna factors had reported that during his short stay in Bihar as its Governor he had shown "that he was no friend of the Dutch." But when the Hugli Agent waited upon him at Dacca he was made to

1. *Stewart's History* p. 301.—In this the Nabob was not wholly to blame. The practice of the Company's servants to carry on private trade duty-free was to a great extent responsible for the harassment.

2. *Master's Diaries* Vol. I.

3. *Tavernier's Travels*.

4. *Riyazus Salatin. Garden. III.* He was given the title of Azim Khan

5. *Consultation Books. Fort St. George. 1678-9* p. 99.

6. *Consultations and Diaries. Aug. and Decr. 1678.*

pay 21,000/- Rupees for a *perwanah* of free trade, which, when it was secured, proved to be of little value, for Prince Azam left Bengal almost immediately after and Saista Khan returned in 1679 to ride them like an incubus for another ten years.

Inspite of these oppressions and exactions, inspite of harassment caused by the two Dutch wars of 1665-7 and 1672-74 the English trade in Bengal flourished. A factory was established at Dacca in 1658 and another at Maldah or Englesbad in 1676. The Bengal stock increased from £65,000 in 1675 to £100,000 in 1677 and £1,50,000 in 1680. The exportation of saltpetre in one year was 1000 tons. The two visits of Streynshan Master to Bengal in 1676 and 1679 had the effect of putting the Company's affairs altogether on a better footing. He recommended better housing of the Company's servants, a remodelling of the manner of keeping accounts and an improvement of their salaries. The importance of Patna grew apace on account of the abandonment of saltpetre trade on the west coast in 1668 and of Masulipatam in 1670. A change also had come upon the spirit of the servants of the Company. They were weary of having to bribe every petty potentate, weary of having to purchase the goodwill of every incoming Governor and weary of having to tremble for their trade whenever there was a change of government and they had come to think that the only remedy lay in procuring an Imperial *farman*. Streynshan Master had laid special emphasis upon the necessity of it and pointed out that otherwise it would be impossible for them to get on with the Nabob and their officers "granting orders one day and disannulling them the next". In February 1677 the Agent at Hugli was directed "to take the best course for procuring a *phirmaund* for the whole empire if they could

do it at the same cost for that of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, if not to try for Bengal and Bihar and Orissa only"¹ and they suggested the name of the Chief of Patna as the most likely person to do it. This was Job Charnock, the future Founder of Calcutta.

1. *Diaries and Consultations Fort St. George, 1672-8 p. 128.*

CHAPTER IX.

THE FACTORY AT PATNA.

JOB CHARNOCK.

Daud Khan, the Governor of Bihar, left Patna in 1655 to take up the subedarship of Khandesh and fight against the Marhattas. He was succeeded by *Laskar Khan*¹ who died in 1671, and he by *Ibrahim Khan*² the son of Ali Mardan Khan, "the bookish Nizūmzē" whose "officers took advantage of his supineness in his other affaires and almost ruined Pattana". It was to his Chancellor i. e. *Dewan, Waris Khan*, that Saista Khan addressed his *parwanah* in 1672. He was appointed Governor of Kashmir in 1677³. After Ibrahim Khan Prince Azam became the Governor of Bihar but he must have been there for a very short time for we find him in Bengal in 1678 where his stay was equally short, Seif Khan⁴ was next appointed Subedar in 1679 and he remained in the province probably till his death in 1684.

The story of the Patna factory under all these Governors was substantially the same, a long series of extortions by Nabob's officers with or without his conni-

1. *Bernier p. 186 ; Manucci Vol. I p. 86 and Almgirnama. p. 873.*

2. *Clavell at Hugli to the Deputy President at Surat, Jany 14. 1673. Hedges. vol. III xiv.*

3. Sent to Bengal in 1670. Died in 1711. *Manucci vol, III p. 35 n.*

4. Son of Tarbiyat Khan. Died in 1684. *Irvine's Manucel vol. I. 358 n.*

vance. Sometimes they would come on a most frivolous pretext and seal up the Company's warehouse and refuse to allow it to be opened till large sums of money had been paid. Sometimes the saltpetre boats laden and ready to start would be detained on one plea or another, and the boatmen instigated to abscond. A wearisome higgling about the present would ensue, followed by a still more wearisome passing of orders which took as much time and had to satisfy as many formalities as in the famous Circumlocution Office. Even after the boats had been fairly started they would be seized and detained ~~by~~ a Daroga or Fouzdar through whose jurisdiction they had to pass and would not be on their way again till his itching palm had been lubricated with the golden oil. It was not also unusual for a Governor to press the Company's boats into his service, "turn out the goods on the shore and force them to carry his own". Whenever there was a military expedition, be it against a petty zemindar or a well-supported impostor, the Company's factory, like the other merchants, would be laid under heavy contributions. But inspite of all these exactions and vexations the Patna trade flourished. The prosperity of the English factory was in no inconsiderable degree due to the energy and tact of the man who joined it immediately after its first official recognition and guided its affairs in its early years beset with dangers and difficulties that might have made a less strong mind "despair of the republic". That man was Charnock.

We know nothing of Charnock's lineage and birth¹. He came out to India in 1656, apparently not in the

I. "The Founder of Calcutta" by Archdeacon, Firminger in *Bengal Past and Present*, Oct. 1907. *Hedges Diary* vol. II.

service of the Company. For two years he remained in the Company's settlements as a "freeman". On 30th September, 1658¹ he was appointed the "Fourth" at Cossimbazaar. It is doubtful, however, if he did ever join this post. In August, 1658 both Ken, the newly appointed Chief of Cossimbazaar, and Charnock were at Balasore². But in February 1659 Chamberlain, the Chief of Patna and Charnock were at Rajmahal *en route* for Patna³. His stay, therefore, at Cossimboazaar must have been a very short one, supposing he had been there at

1. In a "*List of the Hon'ble Company's servants in the Bay of Bengala*" occurs the following entry :

"Job Charnock—Second at Hugli : arrived in India 1656 ; entertained in the Company's service Sept. 30, 1658 ; Senior merchant, 1666. Present pay £40."

Fort St. George : Consultation Book (1679-80). Also Master's Diaries Vol. II p. 16.

2. Sir H. Yule thinks that the Cossimbazar Factory was not regularly occupied till 1659.

Thomas Bateman at *Balasore* writes to James Pickering, Aug. 1658 : "Loving Friend, Mr. Pickering,

Your friend is not yet recovered but has every other day his wonted fitt and poor Job begins to droope and sympathise with John's sickness." *Hedges. Diary Vol. III cxcii.*

3. *Henry Pickering at Rajmahal to Thomas Davies at Hugli Feb. 1659.* Yesterday arrived this place where found the Bazar almost burnt and many of the people starved for want of food which caused much sadness in Mr. Charnock and myself not so much as the absence of your company which we have often remembered in a bowle of the clearest punch, having no better liquor : Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Charnock are going tomorrow to *Pattāna*. Mr. Charnock for the quicker dispatch of his voyage is now cutting his haire and intends to enter into the Moore's fashion this day."—*Hedge's Diary Vol. III cxciv.*

all. He must have been transferred to Patna, almost immediately after his appointment, to fill up, like Henry Aldworth, the place of some "now fallen off".

We do not hear anything of him or his doings till February, 1663, when in a memorial dated the 23rd of the month, on the completion of the covenanted period of five years' service, he wrote that "he wished to terminate his service but could continue in it if appointed Chief at Patna". He had his wishes, for in 1664 he was mentioned incidentally in the records as holding that position¹. He was however, made a senior merchant in 1666² and his pay was raised to £40, the salary of the chief at Patna, in 1671.³ So that it seems as if he was made a *pucca* chief in 1671 though he might have acted in that capacity since 1664. In 1675 the Court resolved "for encouragement during his stay in their service at Patna to give him £ 20 per annum as gratuity."

Job Charnock made it his business from the very outset of his career to gain a thorough knowledge of the people of the country in the midst of whom he had to live and with whom he had to transact business. His unique knowledge of the customs and manners of the country, his clear insight into their character and his command over their language proved a valuable asset to the Company⁴. To acquire these things he had

1. *Hedges. Diary Vol. II p. xiv.*

2. See supra "*List of Company's servants 1679—80.*"

3. *Hedges Diary Vol. II xiv.*

4. The Court wrote in 1693 in connection with the troubles caused by the Interlopers at Hugli :

"Beard wanting in the language of the country could not work so secretly as you may doe that have such perfect knowledge of their language and methods in all respects". *Hedges. Diary Vol. I p. 17.*

to mingle freely with the people and to be able to do so he had to "Indianize." On his way to Patna he Cut his hair short "to enter into the Moore's fashion." He learned their language and married an Indian wife.

Job charnock, it is said, rescued a *Sati* from funeral pyre at Patna and married her in 1678 or 1679. A romantic account of the incident has been given in a set of verses¹ intended to form the epitaph of the pilot of the Ganges, Joseph (or more properly Joshiah) Townshend.

"Shoulder to shoulder, Joe, my boy, into
the crowd like the wedge,
Out with the hanger, messmates, but do
not strike with the edge.
Cries Charnock, "Scatter fagots ! Double
that Brahmin in two ;
That pale widow is mine, Joe, the little
brown girl is for you."

The story is given in an equally romantic form though in prose in the "*Bengal Obituary (1851)*": "Before or after the year 1678-9, Mr, Charnock smitten with the charms of a young and beautiful Hindu, who, decked with her most pompous ornaments and arrayed in her finest drapery was at the point of sacrificing an innocent life (perhaps) of fifteen summers on the altar of paganism, directed his guards to seize the half-unwilling victim.

1. The verses were not inscribed on the tablet which was one of the many embeded at the base of the Charnock Masoleum. They appeared first in the "Englishman" of July 14, 1869. They were unsigned but have been attributed to Sir A. C. Lyall.

Towshend died in 1738 aged 85.—*Illustrated Hand book of St. John's Church p. 16.*

The obedient guards rescued her from an untimely death and Charnock softly conducted her to his house."¹

A more sordid account is given by Hedges²: "I was informed by this (a gentoo of the name of Bulchand, Governor of Cossimbazar) that when Mr. Charnock lived at Patna, upon complaint made to the Nabob that he kept a gentoo's wife (her husband still living or lately dead) who had run away from her husband and stolen money and jewels to a great value, the said Nabob sent 12 soldiers to seize Charnock, but he escaping or bribing the men, they took his Vackeel and kept him two ~~months~~ in prison, the soldiers lying all the while at the factory gate till Charnock compoundeth the business for 3000^l Rs., in money, pieces of broad cloth and some sword blades." Hamilton in his *New Account of the East Indies* repeats the story of the *Sati* and adds that he "was credibly informed by both pagans and Christians who lived at Calcutta" that Charnock became a convert to his wife's religion and used to commemorate her death which occurred about 1690 by the annual sacrifice of a cock to her manes.

This would make one suspect that Job Charnock's wife was neither a Brahmin nor a *Sati* but a low caste Hindu woman and that Hedges was in the main correct in the version he gave of the circumstances of the marriage. The custom of offering a cock to the spirits of the departed has been shown by Dr. Wise³ to have belonged to the sect of *Panch Pir* in Bihar, a cult, originally confined to low class Mahomedans but after-

1. *Bengal Past & Present*. Jany. 1908.

2. *Hedges. Diary Sub Anno 1682*.

3. *In J. A. S. B. Lxiii, Pt. III no 1 of 1894*: Also *Wilson's Annals Vol. I p. 93 n.*

wards adopted by low caste Hindus. Low caste Hindus did not as a rule practice *Sati*.

The circumstantial details of Hedge's account lend it an air of truth. The insuperable prejudice that would stand in the way of a high caste Hindu mating with a Christian, particularly in those days, would make the story of the *Sati*, in itself, an improbable one. Moreover "it is not likely" says Sir Henry Yule, "that a European at Patna or elsewhere in the country could have ventured in those days to abduct a *Sati* from the pyre."

That she was a low caste woman is farther corroborated by a remark that occurs in "a ~~Hugh~~ letter dated the 16th November 1690" which among other subjects commented on the "evil consequences of marriages with natives, "as in the case of Mr. Job Charnock and the woman he kept tho' of a *meane cast* and great poverty which occasioned great trouble and charges to the Company a long while at Pattana and afterwards some also at Cossimbazar".¹

If she were neither a *Sati* nor a high caste woman it was not impossible that she professed the cult of *Panch Pir* and that her husband learnt the rites of the cult from her and practised them after her death.² As the wife

1. *Hedges. Diary II, ccix.*

2. Archdeacon Firminger regards Hamilton's story as a piece of "Interloper's calumny". The ground on which he bases his opinion is that there is no tomb of his wife on which the cock was alleged to have been sacrificed, that the masoleum under which Job and his two daughters lie buried contain no mention of his wife in the inscriptions on the tablets.

The masoleum was erected in 1697 by Charnock's son-in-law, Eyre. He might have been ashamed of his Indian mother-in-law and so omitted her name from the inscriptions. The mother's name was not given in the baptismal entries of Job Charnock's

is, the husband is ; mated with a pagan it is not surprising that "the grossness of her nature" had weight to drag him down, and it would not be very strange if Job Charnock like Cromwell and other men of his type had a spice of superstition in his composition which made him indulge in the benighted rites of his wife's religion.

There is nothing, however, to show that this "mixed marriage" turned out to be a source of misery as it is said always to do. On the other hand the story of his having erected a tomb over his wife's grave and commemorated her death ~~over~~ by the yearly sacrifice of a cock seems to indicate that the grim old Job had always a soft corner in his heart for his dusky Indian wife. One likes Job the better for it.

Charnock had three daughters¹ and no son. His eldest daughter, Mary, was married to Charles Eyre or Eyres, afterwards knighted and made the first Governor of Bengal. The daughters were baptised at St. Mary's Church on 19th. Aug. 1689 by John Evans, the famous chaplain of Bengal, who was hand and glove with Job Charnock till he left India in 1693. It is significant that there is no mention made in the baptismal record of the mother of the girls².

daughters. It is also possible that the tomb stood elsewhere and like many other things of the world has disappeared. Who knows if it may not be discovered some day ?

1. Mary died in 1697. Charles Eyre visited England in 1698 and fell in love with a lady to marry whom he resigned Company's service within a year after his return to India in 1700. Elizabeth, the second daughter married Mr. Bowridge and the 3rd daughter, Katherine, was married to Jonathan White. She died on 21st Jany. 1701.

2. *Bengal Past and Present*. Jany 1908. Photograph facing p. 84. *A page from the Baptismal Register, St. Mary's Church, Fort St. George.*

Job Charnock was not a "Happy Warrior", a Sir Galahad or an "Admirable Crichton," but a rough-hewn hero of the type of William the Conqueror and Cromwell, or Sivaji and Ranjit Singh. He was made of such stuff as founders of kingdoms and pioneers are made of—a strong but not an amiable character, a man bent upon doing things but one who cared not what means he employed to attain his ends. His age and environment were not calculated to make a scrupulously honest man and Job Charnock was not a scrupulously honest man¹. Bribery and failing that force appeared to him to be the only way to transact business in India and he openly recommended it to his masters. Like Lysander of old he adopted the lion's skin when the fox's had failed. His dealings with the native merchants and with his colleagues were neither humane nor just. Allen Catchpole who had incurred his displeasure at Patna and whose "carriage towards him" at Cossimbazar "was not such as should be" was hounded out of the Company's service. Trenchfield, Littleton and poor Mr. Hedges, the first Agent at Hugli who was independent of Fort St. George, found it to their cost what it was to be pursued by his implacable animosity.² The merchants were forced to pay 2 p. c. commission on the goods they sold

1. Hedges Diary Vol. I pp. 81, 85 ; "The great prejudice the weavers have generally received against him by taking 2 p. c. of them to price their goods favourably ; and paying off them with light money."

2. Trenchfield opposed Charnock and was dismissed. Ed. Littleton, the Chief of Cossimbazar, whom Job Charnock succeeded, was dismissed in 1683. Poor Hedges "got broken by collision with a vessel so freighted with the Company's benediction and so fortified with the sense of its value." He was dismissed with disgrace in 1684.

to him, the weavers had light coins forced upon them and "when any poor ignorant native transgressed his laws, they were sure to undergo a severe whipping for a penalty and "the execution was generally done when he was at dinner, so near his dining room that the groans¹ and cries of the poor man served him for music". There is no doubt some exaggeration in these stories which should be taken *cum grano salis* coming as they did from people who bore no love to Charnock. But still there is no denying the fact that he was a dangerous man to cross. We may say what the Saxon Chronicler said of William of Normandy: "Stark he was to men who withstood him and dour."

But he was a faithful servant of the Company. The Company knew it and lavished their favours upon him. They made him a senior merchant before he had completed the eighth year of his service, confirmed him as the chief of a factory, before he had been a senior merchant of five year's standing, granted him a gratuity of £20 a year before he had been four years a chief and held out to him promises of further rewards which were not slow in coming. They placed on record the great confidence they had in him. When Streynsham Master, exasperated by what appeared to him to be deliberate defiance of authority by a subordinate cancelled his appointment as the chief at Cossimbazar the Company set aside the order and wrote that "they would dismiss the whole of their other agents rather than Mr. Charnock should not be the chief at Cossimbazar."¹ Job had the chiefship and Streynsham

1. Hamilton's *New Account of the East Indies*

1. Bruce's *Annals Vol. II p. 450*. Also Company's Letter to Streynsham Master, dated Jany. 5, 1681. *Diaries Vol. I Intro. p. 120*.

Master "the sack." When Richard Trenchfield brought some complaints against him he was dismissed the service; the Company remarking ; "The experience we have of Mr. Charnock for 34 years past, and finding all that hate us to be enemies to him, having wrought such a confidence in our mind concerning him that we shall not upon any ordinary suggestions against him, change our ancient and constant opinion of his fidelity to our interest¹." And this was when dark days had come upon the Company in Bengal in 1688.

With his characteristic energy Charnock must have made the business at Patna "hum" and it flourished for all the harassment caused by the officials of the "bookish" Nabob, Ibrahim Khan, in spite of the perwanah addressed to his chancellor, Waris Khan, by Saista Khan, the governor of Bengal in 1672. In 1674 the Agent at Hugli received instructions to keep the saltpetre men constantly employed so that a quantity of saltpetre might be always ready for shipment. The Patna factory did its best to meet the demand though it had to face many difficulties. In September 1677 "the Pattana Duan" issued positive orders that "without paying custom (and he charged 3 p. c. and not 2 p. c. as at Surat), Petre boats should not stir from Patna. They had to bribe the Duan with Rs. 1200/- and comply with his conditions though they were hard, seeing that "custom had always been paid at Hugli and never at Patna²." The Dutch, too, often seduced the Saltpetremen of the English Factory and persuaded them to sell saltpetre to them surreptitiously. In November 1677

1. *Court Letter to the Fort of 15th. Feb. 1689.* Hedges. Vol. II p. lxxvi.

2. *Sundry Book 1677-8. Letter dated 24th Sept. and 19th Oct. 1677.*

"the petre was stopt and turned ashore near Cossimbazar notwithstanding all endeavours to the contrary and the boats pressed to carry the old Nabob Saista Khan's goods to Pattana.....So that it was impossible to gett the said goods time enough down to go thence by Europe ships.¹" These boats by the way were not hired boats, they belonged to the Company. We have seen how the Hugli Agency started building a fleet of their own. Afterwards the subordinate factories were also instructed "to invest a part of the money in their treasury in building and maintaining boats on the river²." But boats had still to be hired occasionally when the Company's boats were not sufficient to meet the demand for saltpetre.

The English in Bengal had now become weary of these incessant troubles and they thought, quite erroneously as they found later on, that an Imperial *Farman* would put an end to them. In 1677 the Agent at Hugli was directed "to take the best course for procuring a *phirmaund* from the Moghull" and Charnock was asked by Clavell, the Agent at Hugli "to dispatch away an able Vackeel to Dilly that he might endeavour for a removal of the troubles which they received from the Daroga and New Duan³." Charnock had no great faith in the virtues of an *Imperial Farman*. "The king's *hookim*" he wrote to the Agent "is as small value as an ordinary Governor's." He had seen the essential weakness of the Moghul Empire for all its imposing appearance and pomp and thought that an "*hasbulhukim* or *phirmaund*" of Oramshaw (Aurungzeb) had not "that great force and binding" which it had in the days of Shah Jehan, "all his

1. *Fort St. George Diary and Consultation 1677-98 p. 128.*

2. *Bruce's Annals Vol. II.*

3. *Consultation Book, Fort St. George 1676 p. 107.*

Governors making small accompt there of." Still he offered to procure a *farman* "for between 38 or 40 thousand repees charges." About this time (1678) Prince Azam who had been for a short time in Bihar and had shown favour to the English there, came to Bengal as its Governor, and Mr. Mathias Vincent, the chief at Hugli, thought that he could procure a *perwanah* from the Prince at less cost. He went to Dacca and after dancing attendance upon the prince for two months and spending Rs. 21,000/- obtained a *perwansh* which his successor, Nabob Shaista Khan who returned to Bengal in 1679 refused to recognize. Efforts were then renewed for an *Imperial Farman* and one was granted by Aurungzeb in 1680. There was great rejoicing when it reached Hugli on July, 8, 1680. "It was received with much ceremony, 300 guns being fired from the factory and the ships anchored opposite the town^s." But they soon discovered that they need not have been so much elated. "This document" says Wilson "is an historical example of the difficulties that arise from uncertain

1. "Had it been another king as Shah Jehan whose phirmaunds and hasbbal hookums were of such great force and binding that none dare to offer to make the least exception to any of them, it might have seemed somewhat reasonable ; but with the King Oramshed 'tis the contrary, none of which (carry) the least fear with the people, all his governors making small accompt there of" Hedges. *Vol. I xvii.*

Charnock's view was corroborated by Khafi Khan ; "Through out the Imperial dominions no fear and dread of punishment remained in the hearts of the provincial grandees." Elliot. *Vol. VII. p. 248.*

The President at Surat in 1636 thought the same thing Of Shah Jehan. See supra.

2. Stewart's *History p. 308*

punctuation." The farman being in the Persian language was written without stops. The Armenian translator put a full stop which changed its meaning. According to the interpretation of the Company's servants a custom of 3½ p. c. should be charged only at Surat, the trade elsewhere being duty-free. But the Nabob's officers interpreted it to mean that the same duty should be levied everywhere. And before long the Company's servants and the Nabob's officers were at loggerheads again.

Job Charnock's chiefship at Patna was now drawing towards its end. In 1678 he was offered the secondship at Fort St. George which he declined. In 1679 he was offered the chiefship at Cossimbazaar. But as he delayed in coming down to take over charge the order was cancelled by Streynsham Master in December 1679, and he was appointed second at Hugli instead. Streynsham Master objected to Charnock's delay in sending down the saltpetre boats for which ships had to be kept waiting and at last to depart with only 8000 Maunds of it procured at Cossimbazaar¹. Nor did he approve of what he considered a subordinate's open defiance of authority in delaying to take over charge at Cossimbazaar as directed by him. Charnock on the other hand resented the imperious manner in which the orders were conveyed to him, the more so as he had explained the reasons for his delay. The Nabob had stopped the boats², sealed up the warehouses and the boatmen demanded Rs. 5,500 as demurrage for delay. Master thought that the Chief at Patna

1. *Diary and Consultation, Fort St. George. Dec. 1679.*

2. The boats were 31 in number and were laden with 29, 890 Maunds of saltpetre. *Letter of J. Charnock dated 13th Oct., 1679.*

Consultation Book (1678-9) p. 139. The Nabob was Saif Khan,

should not have hesitated to pay 1000 or 2000 Rs. for clearing the boats. Job Charnock who knew the men he had to deal with better than Master was for driving a hard bargain. He got the boats cleared at last for Rs. 700. But when everything was ready, the Nabob fell ill and the order could not be signed¹.

Master's orders were set aside by the Company and Job Charnock took over charge of the Cossimbazaar Factory in January, 1681 when, at the end of the season, Littleton, the late Chief had finished his year's investment and was ready to vacate his post.

Job Charnock's stay at Patna had far-reaching effects upon the English settlements in the Bay of Bengal. The English at Patna were in direct contact with the Mahomedan Governor ; those of Hugli and Cossimbazaar had dealings with only his Foudars. The factory at Dacca, the seat of the Bengal Subedar since the time of Mir Jumla, was not founded till 1668. At Patna they had opportunities for acquainting themselves with and studying the progress of affairs at the Court of Delhi. In fact all news from Delhi reached Hugli *via* Patna and the Chief at Patna who often had a Vackeel at Delhi was expected to keep the Hugli Agent posted up with the doings at the Moghal Court. Job Charnock did not fail to take advantage of these opportunities. He carried away with him from Patna a knowledge of the political condition of India which influenced the future policy of the English in Bengal and went a great way to shaping their destiny. He was perhaps the first Englishman to read the signs of the time aright and detect the essential weakness of the Moghul empire under all its magnificence and show of power. The great Moghul

1. *Charnock's letter dated 11th Novr. 1679. Consultation Book (1678-9) p. 150.*

Empire was fast breaking up. The "Roe Policy" of peaceful trade did no longer answer. Time after time they had procured *farmans*, *hashbul—hookums* and *perwanahs* at heavy costs only to find that the costly goodwill of a Mahomedan Governor was as unstable as water and the formidable looking documents procured with great pains and lavish distribution of money were mere scraps of paper. If they wanted to remain in India, it must be by impressing upon the rulers that it was not an easy thing to drive them away. It was this lesson that Job Charnock had learnt at Patna; how he translated it into action in Bengal we will see in the next chapter.

We cannot conclude this chapter without referring to one prominent feature of Job Charnock's administration of the Patna factory, namely, the absence of those unseemly quarrels among the servants of the Company that recur so persistently in the annals of the other factories and of those troubles with the native merchants and brokers which, as in the case of Raghoo Poddar, in Bengal caused the Company infinite vexation and heavy pecuniary losses.¹ An incident closely resembling that of Raghoo Poddar occurred at Singhiya but the prompt and tactful measures taken by the Chief nipped the trouble in the bud.

On March, 8, 1671 at 9 O'clock at night Sibaram Malik, the Company's poddar, was killed by one Bishambhar who had formerly been in the Company's service.² He

1. Raghu poddar was the cashier at Cossimbazaar. He was in debt to the Company. He was murdered by Ananthram, a broker in the employ of the Company who tried to shield the murderer. It resulted in a protracted inquiry and the payment of an indemnity of 18,000 Rs. by the Company.

2. Master's *Diaries Vol. I. P. Evidence of John Marshall the second at Patna (1669-71)*.

owed some money to the Company the payment of which Sibaram demanded of him finding him in the factory. Bishambar got angry and abused Sibaram, at which the latter ordered a *chopdar* to seize him by the cloth on his shoulders. Bishambar let go the cloth, rushed upon Sibaram and stabbed him with a dagger he had hidden under his clothes. Sibaram died immediately. The Chief did not waste time in making inquiries and thus creating a belief that the factors were implicated in the murder. He handed the murderer over to the Governor at once who kept him in prison for a time but afterwards set him free on he and his family becoming Mahomedans.

CHAPTER X.

JOB CHARNOCK IN BENGAL.

Job Charnock made over charge of the Patna Factory to George Peacock who had once been the "third" at Patna and was now appointed Chief with Jeremy Peachy as "second" and Samuel Meverell, "third". Shortly after his departure troubles came upon the English both in Bengal and Bihar in battalions.

Saista Khan had returned to Bengal in 1679 with instructions from the Emperor to levy in Bengal *Jiziah*, a poll-tax on all non-Musalmans. His officers questioned the interpretation the English had put upon the farman of Aurungzeb and demanded 3½ p. c. custom upon all goods as at Surat. The "Interlopers"¹ showed an unusual activity, captured a considerable portion of the Company's trade, won the good graces of the local officials and went "swaggering about the Company's settlements abusing the merchants, beating the servants and speaking scornful words of the Company". A terrible storm swept over Masulipatam towards the close of (October) 1679² and drowned 20,000 persons and damaged the factory and its goods. Mathias Vincent, the Agent at Hugli, was dismissed and was succeeded by William Hedges who was appointed "Agent and Governor of the Bengal factories" independent of Fort St. George. Charnock had been promised the

1. 2 p. c. duty plus 1½ p. c. *Jiziah*.

2. *Letters from Fort St. George, 1679. p. 46.*

Chiefship at Hugli¹. Baulked of what he considered his due he began to create troubles and obstruct Hedges in every way, which threw the Company's business in Bengal much into confusion.

Hedges arrived at Hugly in July, 1682, accompanied by a corporal and twenty soldiers, the humble beginning of the English army in Bengal and found the interloper hobnobbing with the factors and great in favour with the Nabob's officers whom they had heavily bribed. All efforts to drive them from the settlements failed as did Hedges' negotiations to get a *perwanah* from the Nabob to allow the English to trade in Bengal free of duties and Jiziah on payment of Rs. 5000 as *peshkash*. He obtained only a temporary suspension of the duty on condition that he would procure a *farman* of the Moghul Emperor "within 7 months from this date, Nov. 11, 1682". The condition was not fulfilled and Hedges tried to carry on trade free of custom by heavy bribes, an unwise policy that was abandoned by his successor who admitted the claim and paid the custom. Hedges, "a zealous and (pecuniarily) honest man"² was lacking in tact and strength. He proved an all-round failure and was dismissed in January 1684 and Bengal was once more subordinated to Fort St. George. But Job Charnock did not yet get the much coveted chiefship. Agent Gyfford at Fort St. George was made also the Agent at Hugli and managed the affairs in Bengal under the title of the President over both settlements,

1. Company's *Letter to Fort St. George*, dated the 5th Jan'y. 1681.

2. So says Barlow in his *Introduction to the Diary P. 3*. Hedges made nothing of opening letters not addressed to him and employing spies ; and he lent too ready an ear to notorious scandalmongers.

from Aug. 1684 to January, 1685, when John Beard, succeeded him. The troubles in Bengal had now become very acute and they so weighed upon the Agent's mind that he sickened and died on Aug. 28. 1685,¹ and Job Charnock at last became the Chief at Hugli.

The affairs in Bengal had now come to a crisis. The Viceroy's unfavourable attitude towards the English led the officials as well as the native merchants to cause endless vexation. The Government of St. George as well as the Court urged the withdrawal of the inland factories but this could not be done without money to pay off the debts they owed. A suit was brought against the factory at Cossimbazaar by some native merchants and the Cazy gave them a decree for Rs. 43,000. Job Charnock refused to pay it for which, it is said, he was scourged² by the Foujdar and the factory was besieged. All trade was stopped and ships were sent away half empty. Presents and representations made to the Viceroy at Dacca brought no relief. Abdul Ganni, the Foujdar at Hugli, drew up certain articles of trade and peremptorily required the Council to accept and sign them. The Agent refused and the factory was in a manner besieged like Cossimbazaar and boycotted. Vackeels and peons refused to serve and the factors were subjected to frequent insults and were often required to appear personally before the Cazies on most

1. So notorious was this fact at the time, like Keat's life snuffed out by an article, that Job Charnock thought fit to insert it in the list of damages compensation for which should be demanded from the Moghul Court. His letter to Surat dated 9th Decr. 1686.... "For besieging of Hugli Factory Death of the Agent and 4 men—Rs. 300,000.

2. *Orme's Historical Fragments.*

frivolous charges.¹ No sooner had a riot at Balasore which brought the English there into collision with the Foujdar been composed "with great expense and trouble" than a peon belonging to the Kotwal was murdered and the crime fixt on the English "with some reason. It was accommodated at last "with great charges upon the Hon'ble Company".²

A Vackeel, Mahomed Hanif, was sent to Delhi to represent to the King and the Vizier their grievances and pray for redress. He took a long time in getting to Delhi and, when there, spent large sums of money without obtaining any relief.

Agent Beard died in the midst of these troubles on the 28th August, 1685 but Charnock could not leave Cossimbazaar factory to take up the Hugli Chiefship till April of the following year, so closely was the factory guarded and so carefully were his movements watched. He had the Chiefship at Hugli at last but it was a Charybdis he stepped into from his Scylla at Cossimbazaar. All trade had come to a stand-still ; the factory was in a state of rigorous blockade ; an embargo had been laid upon all provisions and the relation between the English settlers and the Nabob's officials was on the breaking point. On the 28th Octr. 1686 the explosion took place. Three men of the garrison who had gone out to buy their morning food were attacked and wounded by the Foujdar's soldiers. The men of the Factory hurried out to the assistance of their comrades and a free fight followed. Charnock felt that the die was cast ; he put the Company's goods and men on board the ship that rode at anchor under Nicholson before the town, bombarded it, burned 500 houses

2. *Cossimbazaar to Hugli*, dated 2nd Feb. 1685.

3. *Hugli letters*, dated 12th May and 15th June 1685.

and then dropped down the river to the site of modern Calcutta.

Meanwhile the Court had resolved to break with the Moghul Government. They obtained the sanction of King James II to retaliate upon Saista Khan and Aurungzeb for the injuries they had received at their hands and planned an expedition that only exhibited their remarkable ignorance of the country and its condition. The quixotic scheme was foredoomed to failure and it did fail. A large armament of 10 or 12 ships were sent under admiral Nicholson with six companies of infantry and 200 pieces of cannon. The Admiral was to place himself under the command of the President of the Bay and his Council and take and fortify Chittagong and make it the seat of their commerce. Thence the troops should march up to Dacca and take it.

The Nabob as soon as he heard of the disturbances at Hugli ordered the factories at Patna, Malda, Dacca and Cossimbazaar to be confiscated, and sent a large army to Hugli to expel the English. All the outlying factories except Dacca were evacuated. They were all plundered; the factory at Maldah was pulled down on a false information given by a Jemadar¹ that it was a fort. The two factors at Dacca would have been thrown into prison but for the intervention of an influential Hindu named Buramal. Balasore Factory was plundered by the Nabob's men and the town was set on fire by the English.

After having plundered Tannah, burnt Balasore and captured several Moghul vessels, Job Charnock took up his position at Hijli. John Child who had left Bombay

1. *Job Charnock's letter to Surat*, 9th Dec., 1686.

Also *General letter from the Court to Bengal*, Feb. 2. 1713
Wilson's Old Fort William, Pt. I p. 90.

threatened the Moghul vessels on the west coast. Strangely enough all these hostilities were carried on even after negotiations for peace had been opened with the Emperor from Surat and Madras and by Job Charnock with the Nabob. The upshot, however, was that the English left for Madras with all their belongings on Nov. 8, 1689. The "Great Design" had failed.¹

Meanwhile Saista Khan had resigned and started for Delhi leaving Bengal in the hands of a *locum tenens* Bahadur Khan, whom the English called "Caun Jehan Bander." Bahadur Khan was succeeded in a few months by Ibrahim Khan who proved friendly to the English.

The English now felt that they had been rash in their conduct and they made their submission in very humble terms to the Emperor² who was already feeling the loss the withdrawal of the English had inflicted upon his treasury and was ready to forgive. The factory of Surat was fined fifteen thousand Rupees, and Mr. Child was to be expelled. The fine was paid ; Mr. Child was spared the shame of expulsion as he died before the order reached Surat and the English were allowed to carry on trade on paying the old custom. Ibrahim Khan had heard of this decision even before he received the formal order. So he set free the English factors detained at Dacca and invited Charnock to return to Bengal and resume trade. Job Charnock returned to Bengal in August, 1690 and took up his position at Sutanuti, near the mouth of the river. He thought it unwise to reopen the factory at Hugli and dangerous to start business in the outlying

1. Elphinstone's *Rise of Early British Power in the East* p. 55.

Also *Diary and Consultation* 1689 p. 21.

2. *Mill's History* Vol. I p. 86.

factories thus early. He contented himself with only sending Agents into the different parts of the country to collect merchandise.

On the 10th of February 1691 a '*hasbul hookum*' (Letter by order) came from Dehli allowing the Englishmen to trade in Bengal on payment of Rs. 3000/- '*peshkash*' in lieu of custom, and it seemed as if the English were going to have a peaceful time of it under the "bookish Nabob" whom they now began to call "the most famously just and good Nabob."

On the representation of Charnock, the Court agreed to shift the Hugli Factory to Sutanuttee but directed that the factories at Maldah, Dacca and Patna should be withdrawn provided a sufficient quantity of saltpetre could be procured at Hugli. They further directed that Bengal was to remain an independent agency till the death or removal of Charnock. On either event it was to become subordinate to the Fort. Job Charnock did not live long after the restoration of the English in Bengal. Worn out with work and anxiety, enfeebled by the pestilential air of the swamp in the midst of which he had elected to build his factory, his strong mind shaken, his indomitable energy undermined, Job Charnock died in 1693.¹

1. Marshman was thinking of Charnock in the last days of his life when he had become a wreck of his former self, when he described him as a man who "had no large or comprehensive views ; he was vacillating, timid and cruel."

Marshman in the *Calcutta Review* Vol. III. Jany. 1845.

CHAPTER XI.

FACTORY AT PATNA AFTER JOB CHARNOCK.

Trouble had come over Bihar in battalions after the departure of Job Charnock from Patna.

Saif Khan had become the Subedar of Bihar in 1679. He was neither a strong nor a good ruler. Immediately after entering upon his office he committed an outrage upon Mr. Peacock, the English Chief at Patna, who having refused what was nominally a free gift to a new Governor was seized at the Factory, dragged barefoot to Hajipore, the temporary residence of the Governor, and kept in irons until he paid a forced present of £ 90.¹ Complaint was made to the King through a Vackeel but Peacock apparently had no redress.² This disaster was followed by a visitation of God in the form of a storm in the harbour of Patna by which the Company lost 1220 Maunds of saltpetre.³

The next year there were even more serious troubles. A youngman, who gave himself out as a son of Sultan Shuja and called himself "Zavool Obdin"⁴, made his appearance at Patna and called upon the people to espouse his cause. But the Governor had a timely information of the plot and the impostor was seized and

1. Governor Gyfford's letter to the Nabob. Sept. 17, 1684 quoted by Elphinstone in his *"Rise of the Early British Power in the East"* p. 57.

2. *Sundry Book* (1680-1). Octr. 1681, p. 74.

3. *Idem* p. 40.

4. *Letters to Fort St. George* 1682 p. 47.

Stewart's History p. 309.

put in irons before he could gain many partisans, (Dec. 1681). A few days after this event, Gangaram, the Zemindar of Bihar, rebelled and with an army of about five or six thousand horse marched upon Patna. To strengthen his position he gave out 'that Prince Akbar, the third son of Aurungzeb, who had revolted against his father in the preceding year, was with him. The Nabob much alarmed shut himself up in the city till re-inforcements came from Dacca and Benares and the rebels were dispersed. These disturbances, so long as they continued, seriously handicapped the Company's business. Saltpetre could not be sent down in proper time and the Agency at Hugli had to be kept waiting for their Diaries and Account Books; and they produced painful consequences when they were over. The fact that the Company's Factory at Singhiya had been left unmolested by the rebels led the Nabob to suspect that the English were in league with the insurgents. He forbade them to purchase any more saltpetre that year and threw Mr. Peacock into prison whence it was with much difficulty and through earnest intercessions he was rescued.¹ They had troubles also with the interlopers in July, 1683. Hedges wrote to them "to bring up all the saltpetre they could to hinder the interlopers from having any and all other goods procurable at that place"².

George Peacock was discharged from the Company's service as a creature of Mr. Vincent's who "did wickedly abuse us in the sorting of our Romalls" (shandkerchief) and was ordered home. He however died before the order reached Hugli in 1683³. On July 9, 1683 Mr. Joseph

1. Stewart's *History* P. 310—1.

2. Hedges' *Diary* Vol. I p. 98.

3. Streynsham Master's *Diaries* II p. 340 n.

Dods was appointed the Chief with Mr. Samuel Meverell and Mr. James Sowdon as Second and Third respectively¹. Troubles in both Bengal and Bihar had now become so acute that they at Fort St. George, with the approval of the Court, ordered the withdrawal of the inland factories of Patna and Dacca but this they could not do without paying off their debts which including those of Cossimbazaar amounted to "near six lac of rupees²; nor was it to be done at all without the leave and assistance of the Governors and their officers". So they found themselves in a "laberint, they could not go neither could they stay"³. Joseph Dods died on 6th May 1686, after having "squandered about in trade upwards of rupees 18,000 of the Rt. Hon'ble Company's money besides runne himself in debt to the country people about 2,500 rupees more than his goods then in the house would satisfy"⁴ and Roger Braddyll became the Chief⁵ with the old second and third. The troubles in Bengal sent a wave of them into Bihar and the Factors there did not think it safe after Job Charnock had left Hugli to continue at their post⁶. Then came the order for the confiscation of the English factories from Shaistha Khan, the Governor of Bengal. Saif Khan had died in 1684⁷ and had been succeeded by Buzurg

1. Hedges' *Diary* Vol. I. p. 93.
2. *Hugli Letter to the Fort*, 25 Feb. 1685.
3. *Hugli Letter to the Fort*, 20th Nov. 1685.
4. *Patna Council letter to Surat*, 25th Nov. 1686, quoted in Hedges' *Diary* vol. II p. c. xxiii.
5. *Hedges'* vol. II. p. cvii.
6. *Patna Letter to Surat*, June 25, 1687. *Hedges'* vol. II p. lxiv.
7. *Irvine's Manucci* vol. I p. 358n (*masir-ul-umrah* ii 479). Billimoria in his *Letters of Aurungzeb* p. 136 n, gives the date of his death as 1709 which is wrong.

Umed Khan¹, the eldest son of Shaistha Khan, so that his commands were promptly carried out in Patna. The Patna factory had been plundered and Mr. Meverell put in irons by Saif Khan in 1684 for which Charnock had demanded an idemnity of Rs. 80,000². Buzurg Umed Khan now wanted to give the finishing stroke by seizing the factors. But they all escaped. Braddyll, the Chief, saved himself from imprisonment by means of a trick. He was taken prisoner but he got a run-away sergeant named Charles King to personate him and he slipped away to Hugli and thence to Dacca. King was kept a prisoner till 1693 and was paid by Charnock at first Rs. 20 and then Rs. 25 (a month) "to maintain him and

1. Hedges' *Diary* vol. I p. 175. - "A little before it was darke we came to a great Godowne where Busrook Omed Chan (the Nabob of Pathana) this Nabob's son has laid in a vast quantity of salt" This was in 1684.

Irvine describes him as the Governor of Allahabad at the time of his death in 1693.

2. "For what Self Cawn plundered out of factories at Pattana by 1000 foot and 500 horse and putting Mr. Meverell in irons".—*Charnock's letter to Surat*, 9th Dec. 1686.

Meverell is said to have died on 21st May 1686 (*Hedges II. p. cclvi*) but he was one of the signatories of the letter from the Patna Factory to Surat, dated June 25th 1687. I have found also a Samuell Meverall sent as third to the Factory at Conomeer by Fort St. George, letter dated June 21, 1689. There was another Mr. Meverall at Cossimbazaar who was ordered in 1698 to present to the New Dewan with broad cloth etc.

General from Bengal to Court Jan'y 6, 1693 quoted in Wilson's *Fort William* p. 32.

Letters from Fort St. George 1689 p. 34 Sowden afterwards became the second (1689) and Chief at Bencoolen (1690). *Master's Diaries Vol. II p. 271 n.*

keep him from turning Moor". At last on the "death of Buzurg Umed Khan, Rs. 800/- was collected and given to the Dewan of Patna and King was released¹.

1. Hedges' *Diary* Vol. II pp. cvii & cviii "since the death of Buzurgh Omed Can, Nabob of Patna, we have received advice of Mr. King's releasement etc" *Charles Eyre's Letter* dated 15 Jany. 1695.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ENGLISH RESTORATION.

Job Charnock was invited by Ibrahim Khan to return to Bengal and re-open the factories. Charnock returned in August 1690 and shifted the factory from Hugli to Sutanuttee and thus laid the foundation of Calcutta. In 1691 he received orders to reduce the outlying agencies and confine the Company's business at "such place as he thought proper." But the demand for saltpetre continuing as great and pressing as ever trade relations with Patna must have been resumed immediately after the restoration. The Company's boats were soon observed again coming down to Hugli laden with Patna and Maldah goods. But the trade had received a rude shock and it took several years before it regained its former position. The factories had been rifled and the debts owing to the Company had been forced from the merchants by Shaista Khan and Bahadur Khan. The English hesitated to make large investments so that the ships had to return to Madras on several occasions empty or only partially laden.¹ Interruptions to trade recurred as of yore but their evil effects were minimised by the good offices of the friendly Viceroy of Bengal. In 1692 the Sultan of Turkey wrote to Aurungzeb that saltpetre trade in India should be stopped as gunpowder manufactured from it was employed by the Christians

1 "Ship "Orange" arrived from Bengal scarcely 3 quarter laden and nothing near the value we sent down upon her"—*Fort St. George Consultation. Feb. 1692 p. 3.*

against the true believers. The devout Emperor issued strict injunctions on the Governor of Bengal not to allow the English to manufacture any more saltpetre. The order, however, was never seriously enforced by Nabob Ibrahim Khan and it soon became a dead letter. In January 1693 we hear of some saltpetre boats having been stopped at Patna ; but they were soon under way and arrived at Sutanuttee without any loss or damage.¹ The next year there was a fresh trouble. For some time "the Indian seas had been over-run with pirates chiefly English and all under British colors. One of these Corsairs, the notorious Captain Kyd plundered two ships conveying pilgrims to Mecca and one large ship belonging to the Moghuls. The Emperor in a fury ordered the Surat factors to be thrown into prison and laid an embargo upon all European nations till the pirate was surrendered".² The matter however was accommodated the next year. Neither the person nor the property of the English factors in Bengal were in any way injured and they carried on their trade unmolested. In March 1694 the English were informed that the embargo had been withdrawn and that the order was lying with Silabat Khan who did not deliver them as the necessary fees had not been paid. As the order was in the name of the English, French and Dutch Companies jointly, all of them had to come forward simultaneously with the fees. There might have been difficulties and delay in bringing about this concerted action, so the English procured a special

1. *General from the Agent at Chuttunuttee*, dated 11th Jany 1693—*Consultation Book* (1693) p. 43.

2. *Elphinstone's Rise of the British Power in the East* p. 68. Also *Stewart's History* p. 327.

'*hasbul hookum*' through Isa Khan and resumed their business in safety.¹

Job Charnock died early in 1693² and was succeeded by Francis Ellis. Bengal was subordinated to Madras and the Commissary-General Sir John Goldsborough was sent to Sutanuttee to suggest reforms and bring the disordered affairs of the Bay within the "buckle of rule." Ellis was found incompetent and was superseded in 1694 by Charles Eyre, a son-in-law of Job Charnock. The new Agent on his assumption of office was faced with two great difficulties, one of which however, was not all an evil but a good in the guise of evil and produced consequences of immense advantage to the Company.

Eyre found the country over-run with the interlopers. They had established themselves at Hugli and were countenanced and encouraged by the people of the country. The facilities they enjoyed for buying and selling put the old Company at a disadvantage. As a measure for counteracting the activities of the "Interlopers", Eyre urged the necessity of restoring the inland agencies. Without their restoration it was not possible "to secure an investment to meet the ships of the season" and compete successfully with the interlopers. The system recommended by the Court of occasionally sending a

1. *Consultation Book* (1694) p. 21.

2. 10th Jany. 1693. The inscription on his tomb gives it as 1692 (O. S.) His death was reported to Fort St. George in a "Generall" dated the 10th Jany 1693 per Company's Ship, *Mada-pallam*. *Consultation Book* (1693) p. 40. The massive octagonal mausoleum in St. John's Churchyard was built by his son-in-law Eyre. It fell into ruins and was repaired by the Public Works Department in 1892.

few agents to the important trade centres for collecting merchandise from native traders, confining themselves principally to Bengal goods, and employing the Armenian Merchants for bringing down goods from the Upper Provinces, had not answered.¹ Profitable purchases (particularly of saltpetre) could not be made except in certain seasons of the year and it was necessary to build and maintain boats in the out-agencies for carrying merchandise up and down the river. For all this regular establishments were necessary. Moreover the withdrawal of the outagencies presented an unfavourable contrast to the policy of the Dutch of adding to their factories and lowered the English prestige in the eyes of the natives. Lastly, it was hoped that now that the wicked Nabob of Patna was dead, purchase of saltpetre would be greatly facilitated.² The new Nabob, Fida Khan, was as favourably disposed to the English in Bihar as Ibrahim Khan in Bengal. The Court refused to listen to this for some years. But at last their importunities prevailed. By the year 1702 they had already a factory informally established at Patna under the name of Residency. Formal sanction was given by the United Council in 1705 to meet the Court's urgent order for saltpetre."³

The other serious incident was the revolt in 1696 of the Hindu Zemindar of Midnapore, Sobha Singh, who was joined by an Afghan Chief of Orissa, named

1. Bruce's *Annals* Vol. III p. 113.

2. *From the President of the Council in Bengal to the Court.* April 1684, 14th Dec. 1694 and 15th Jany. 1695 quoted in *Bruce's Annals* Vol. III pp 171 etc. Fida Khan called also *Saleh Khan*, was the son of Azam Khan Koka. (*Billimoria's Letters of Aurungzeb*, 135. n.

3. *Bruce's Annals* Vol. III.

Rahim Khan.¹ The bookish Nabob and his money-making subordinates could do nothing to check the rebels who took Burdwan, Rajmahal, Muxudabad and Maldah, and, in fact, became the masters of the whole of the country west of the Ganges. The Nabob gave the European traders in Bengal permission in general terms to take steps for the defence of their factories. The English took advantage of the permission to lay the foundation of Fort William, a step which they had come to find to be an absolute necessity if they wished to retain their foothold in Bengal and so had been waiting for an opportunity with great eagerness. Ibrahim Khan was recalled in 1697, though his son Zubardust Khan, had wellnigh succeeded in crushing the revolt, and Prince Azim-us-shan was sent down as the Governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The disturbances were suppressed and peace and order restored. With the Government of Azim-us-shan began a new era in the history of the English settlements in Bengal.

1. He was known as Rahim Khan "the 'slit-nose", having had his nose cut off in some battle—*Riyazus Salatin, Garden II.*

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW COMPANY.

When Charles Eyre returned to England in 1699 leaving John Beard as the Agent in Bengal, he found his masters struggling for their very existence with the New Company, their last and bitterest rival. He offered to return to Bengal and help his masters there. Accordingly they had him knighted and sent down to Bengal as its first "President and Governor". Sir Charles' stay in Bengal was, however, a very short one. He arrived there on 26th May 1700 and resigned the service and left on the 7th Jany. 1701, so that he did not do much to safeguard the interests of the Company against the competition of their rival. The brunt of the struggle fell upon his former *locum tenens*, who was now confirmed as his successor,—John Beard, the younger, the son of the Agent who had died of a broken heart in 1685.

The New Company had taken under their wing many of the dismissed servants of the Old Company who brought into trade-rivalry bitter personal animosity. Edward Littleton, who had been the Chief at Cossimbazaar but had been dismissed the Old Company's service for corrupt dealings in 1682, was knighted and sent out as the President of the New Company in Bengal. He had three other dismissed servants of the Old Company to assist him "in bearing down the Old Company as best they might" and they set about it with a will. The Old Company resolved to resist. "Our joints are too stiff", they said, "to yield to ur juniors.

We are veteran soldiers in this warfare"¹. But it was with the courage of despair that they steeled their hearts. "When things are at their worst they must mend.....We think ourselves on the ground already, so can't have a greater fall".²

The New Company soon proved themselves to have been born under an unlucky star. An ambassador, Sir William Norrice was despatched to the Court of Delhi to procure a *Farman* and efforts were made to secure in Bengal the same concessions from the Governor as the Old Company enjoyed. The Ambassador, who because of the way he squandered money came to be nicknamed "Sir William Prodigality" failed to get a *Farmam* though he spared no pains to blacken the character of the rival Company, calling them "thieves and confederates of the pirates" and he returned to England in 1702 after a year's stay at Court. The only effect of his embassy was that Aurungzeb taking him at his words held the English responsible for the piracy committed upon three Moghul ships coming from Mocha by Captain Kyd who had gained strength enough to blockade both the western and eastern coasts of India and ordered in 1702 the sequestration of all European factories and imprisonment of all the factors.³ This told more heavily upon the New Company than upon the Old for the latter had come to possess by now several fortified places like the one at Sutanuttee where their property might be safe.

Sir Edward Littleton had established factories at Hugli, Balasore and Dacca but not at Cossimbazaar

1. *Court to Bengal*, Aug. 26, 1699.

2. *Court to Bengal*, Oct. 28, 1699.

3. Elphinstone's *Rise of the British Power in the East*, p. 68 etc See Supra.

and Maldah¹ for want of men and had managed to obtain some concessions from the Governor by paying heavy bribes, the heavier on account of the rivalry which the shrewd officers of the Nabob did not fail to make capital of, but he still found trade as handicapped as before. "The extortions of the country officers", he complained in 1702, "have created great difficulty in complying with the order of Saltpetre from Patna." When Aurungzeb's order came to Bengal in February, 1702 the servants of the old Company at Patna, Rajmahal and Cossimbazaar were seized with all their effects but when the Foujdar at Hugli threatened to seize the goods at Calcutta, President Beard mounted a few additional guns, increased the garrison and stopped all Moghul ships going to Persia and Surat for nine days and brought the Foujdar and the Governor to a more reasonable frame of mind. But the servants of the New Company had neither anticipated the blow nor were prepared to meet it. "At one stroke they cost us not less than Rs. 60,000/-, and instant ruin stared us in the face."

The New Company were thus in an uncomfortable position which lent emphasis to the idea of coalition that had suggested itself to their mind within a few months of their establishment². The King proposed a union; the proposal was readily accepted. The Union was ratified by the General Court of both Companies on 27th April 1702. The affairs of the United Company were finally settled and its constitution finally shaped by the award of Godolphin in 1708.

1. *Bruce's Annals* Vol. III p 416.

2. *Hunter's History* Vol. II p. 329. *Beveridge's History of India*, Bk. III Chap. VIII p. 377.

The news of the union reached Bengal in July 1702¹ and there came into being on the 1st of February 1704 what has been called the "Rotation Government." "The power of the United Companies were vested in a Council of eight made up of four senior members selected from each Company. The President of the Old Company, Mr. Beard, and the President of the New Company, Sir Edward Littleton were to act as the President of the Council one on each alternate week". The Rotation Government came to an end in 1710. So long it lasted it was nothing but a source of trouble to all concerned. The divided responsibility of this double-headed administration led to a slackening of control upon the subordinate officers of both the companies and offered an excuse to the Nabob and his officers to double their extortions for they could not or would not understand this amalgamation.

Beard, the President of the Old Company, died in 1705 and his place was taken up by Ralph Sheldon¹. Littleton was dismissed the same year and died two years later. His successor was Robert Hedges. This pair of presidents continued in office till the Directors dissatisfied with the form of administration resolved now to have only one president and they appointed Sir Anthony Weltden, the President of the Council and Governor of Fort William on 10th Nov. 1709. He arrived in Bengal about the middle of July 1710 and the Rotation Government came to an end.

1. Ralph Sheldon, the first Collector of Calcutta died, at Hugli in April 1709. His place in the Council was taken up by John Russell.—*Consultation* 24th April, 1709.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AS ZEMINDAR.

On the arrival of the Prince, Azim-us-shan, Zuber-dust Khan resigned his command and left with his father for Delhi. Azim-us-shan called upon the Zemindars of Bihar and Bengal to help him in overthrowing the rebel, and took up his position at Burdwan. Rahim Shah had taken heart at the departure of Zuber-dust Khan, collected a great force, plundered Hugli and Nuddea and encamped within a few miles of Burdwan. A battle was fought near the town in which Rahim Shah was killed, his followers were dispersed or exterminated, and peace was restored in Bengal. The English availed themselves of it to take steps for strengthening their position at Sutanuttee.

Messrs. Walsh and Stanley accompanied by Khoja Sarhad, an influential Armenian merchant, waited upon the Prince at Burdwan in Jany, 1698 "to procure from his Highness the grant of the villages of Sutanuttee, Kalikata and Govindapur, to demand restitution of their property which had been taken from the rebels at Rajmahal and detained by Zuber-dust Khan and to solicit confirmation of the privilege enjoyed by the Company of trading without payment of any duties. The embassy was very successful in its mission. On payment of 1000 gold mohurs or Rs. 16,000 the Company was given permission to purchase the three villages assessed at a yearly rental of Rs. 1195¹. On account of the usual

1. The Company had to pay Rs. 1300 or 1800 to the zemindars, the Mazumdars of Calcutta. *Bengal Past and Present* Vol. V. p. 151.

procrastination of the Mahomedan court the final order was not received till the end of the year and that for free trade not till 1700. This was a great advance for the Company as it raised them at once from the position of mere trading adventurers, dependent upon the caprice of the reigning Nabobs, to an assured status as landowners, paying a yearly rental to the Emperor of Delhi and receiving in return authority to collect rents and to administer justice according to Mahomedan law within the boundaries of the villages."¹ By the *sanad* of 1717 they were granted permission to purchase 38 neighbouring towns or villages. But this permission could never be given effect to. Murshid Kuli would not allow the Zemindars to sell any land nor would the Court approve of the purchase except of such lands as lay very close to Calcutta, "within two miles of the river",² and they bade them remember that "they were not fond of much territory".³ But within the three villages which grew into the town of Calcutta they possessed almost unlimited power of which they availed themselves in raising fortifications. We have seen how Eyre took advantage of the permission of Ibrahim Khan and laid the foundation of Fort William, the main lines of which were begun by Beard and completed about 1740.

But this did not put an end to their troubles in respect of trade. Azim-us-shan was a covetous man. He revised the excise duty on many commodities, and regulated the customs of the port of Hugli, levying two and a half per cent on all goods belonging to the Mahomedans, 3½

1. Blechynden's *Calcutta Past and Present* p. 15.

2. *Court to Bengal*, Decem. 3rd, Feb. 1719. *Auber* p. 24.

3. *Court to Bengal*.—16 Feb. 1721. *Auber* p. 25. See *Inpa*

p. c. on the Christians and 5 p. c. on the Hindus. He introduced a state monopoly in certain commodities, purchasing them at a low price and selling them at a considerable profit, and he was ever on the look-out for bribes. When the Foujdar of Hugli insisted upon sending a Cazy to Calcutta for administering justice to the subjects of the Moghul Empire who had gone to Calcutta attracted by its prosperity and security, the English had to avert the evil by paying a heavy bribe to the Prince. When the order of the Emperor came to Bengal in 1702 laying an embargo upon the trade of the Europeans, money had to be lavishly given to all officers from the Governor to the *mutsuiddies* before the factors imprisoned could be set free and the trade allowed to be carried on as usual. When the order of the King arrived at Patna withdrawing the embargo he refused to allow them "free trade unless the Company made him a large present". He refused to acknowledge the amalgamation of the two Companies and insisted upon their paying a separate *peshkash* each. In 1702 he had extorted Rs. 60,000 from Littleton and Rs. 15,000 down and Rs. 3000/- annual *peshkash* from the Old Company for the restoration of their right of free trade.

The Emperor did not approve of the money-making policy of the Prince and was angry with the life of pleasure he was leading in Bengal. Accordingly he directed the Dewan of Orissa to be the Dewan of Bengal as well, which greatly curtailed the power of the Prince. He soon quarrelled with the Dewan, Murshid Kuli Khan, and left Bengal to reside at Patna which he fortified and improved and named after himself Azimabad. Murshid Kuli Khan removed the seat of authority in Bengal from Dacca to Muxudabad which henceforth came to be known as Murshidabad. He became the supreme

power in Bengal though he was nominally the Dewan and Prince Azim kept his son at Rajmahal as his Deputy in Bengal. The exactions by the Nabob and his officers continued as of yore though the fortification of Calcutta with its garrison¹ of 120 European soldiers and a number of guns could not but have inspired the native merchants with confidence and respect and raised them highly in the estimation of the commercial world.

1. The United Council resolved in 1705 to keep a garrison of 100 Europeans to be gradually expanded by a yearly reinforcement of 15 or 20 recruits. *Bruce's Annals* Vol. III.

CHAPTER XV.

FACTORY AT PATNA : FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE ENGLISH TO THE DEATH OF AURUNGZEB.

We have seen how the trade relations with Patna were restored immediately after the return of Job Charnock to Sutanuttee though the factory there was not re-opened for sometime to come inspite of the urgent representations of Ellis and Eyre. Job Charnock despatched agents to Patna and Rajmahal to collect merchandise and send them down to Sutanuttee which, according to the orders of the Court, had been made the one principal trade centre.

Teshmaker was the Agent at Rajmahal and Ralph Sheldon at Patna. When the rebellion of Sobha Singh broke out in 1696 both of them were at Rajmahal. They were seized and detained "with 20,000 rupees of goods by the rebels". But the appearance of Zuberdust Khan soon scared away the insurgents and most of the Company's goods were recovered. Zuberdust Khan, however, refused to restore them to the English. The representation of Khoja Sarhad who waited upon him at Rajmahal with a present failed to move him. The embassy of Messrs. Walsh and Stanley to Prince Azim-us-shan was more successful. The English got back most of their property for a bribe.

No sooner was this trouble over than another followed. Incensed at the piracies on the Indian seas the Emperor ordered that the English factories should be confiscated and the factors imprisoned. The factory

at Patna had been by this time re-established with the help of the "substantial *perwanah*" obtained by Mr. Redshaw from the Nabob.¹ The servants of the Old Company at Patna like those at Rajmahal and Cossimbazaar were imprisoned. The order was executed in February 1702, when the season was far advanced and the goods left in the factories were very small in quantity, so that the total loss of the Old Company did not amount to a very large sum.² The Company's servants were confined for 51 days but were afterwards liberated on their parole. Of all the factories, that of Patna, such as it was, fared best. Mr. George Redshaw who was then in charge of it "had found discreet means to secure the Right Hon'ble Company's saltpetre in the merchants' hands".³

The Prince and his officers, heavily bribed, withdrew the embargo in anticipation of the order of the Emperor but when the orders actually came the Prince refused "free trade unless the Company made him a large present" which they had to make. The Company's Vackeel Rajaram was sent to the Dewan in 1704 to negotiate for a *sanad* which was to be in as full terms as possible

1. It was re-established formally by the United Council in 1704 "to meet the Court's urgent order for saltpetre." *Bruce's Annals* Vol. III.

2. *Stewart's History* p. 357 : *Hedges' Diary* Vol. II p. 105 *Bruce's Annals* III p. 506.

3. *Bengal to Court*. Aug. 15, 1702. "We received a letter from Mr. George Redshaw at Patna dated the 27th Feb. advising their being seized upon and all the Company's effects by the Government there to make satisfaction for the piracy committed at sea by the Hatmen which was a great disappointment to the business of the place for a little time before Redshaw had a Seeropaw and a more substantial *perwanah* from the Nabob".

and also to clear their business at Patna. After some hesitation the Council agreed to pay Rs. 30,000 for it. But the negotiations were abruptly broken off on receipt of the news of the death of Aurungzeb in 1707.

Meanwhile Redshaw had come away from Patna on April 14th, 1704 leaving William Cawthrop and William Lloyd in charge of the Residency.¹ They were ordered in July following to come away from Patna but the order was countermanded the next month on account of the President at Madras asking them to make haste and buy what saltpetre they could, coarse or fine, or there would be none to send to the English Directors, as four French ships were on their way to buy saltpetre". The Council was most anxious to retain the Patna Factory. They sent with money and presents two members of the Council, Maisters and Chitty on 14th January 1706² to Patna to superintend the factory and trade there. Things were going on rather smoothly at Patna. Saltpetre boats guarded by soldiers from the Fort plied up and down the stream with only a skirmish now and then with an unreasonable Foujdar³. The Prince had been mollified with presents and was making no further trouble. Then news came of the death of Aurungzeb.

1. A factory had been established at Patna by this time but they called it "Residency".

2. They sent Rs. 60,000 for the purchase of saltpetre. *Bruce's Annals*

3. Pattle had a skirmish with the Foujdar's peons at Rajmahal. Oct. 31st 1706.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FACTORY OF PATNA AFTER THE DEATH OF AURUNGZEB.

Prince Azim-us-shan had heard of the illness of his grandfather towards the close of the year 1706 and begun collecting men and money in Bihar and preparing himself to help his father in the struggle for the throne which, he knew, would inevitably follow'. About this time he was recalled to Court by the Emperor at the instance of his uncle Azam Shah, who was then at Ahmednagar with Aurungzeb. The order "jumped" with his own plans. He made his Dewan, Sarbaland Khan², his Deputy in Bihar but the

1. Khafi Khan (*Elliot* Vol. VII p. 384) and Iradat Khan. (p. 539) and following them Colonel Stewart (*History* p. 360) say that Azim-us-shan was on his way to Agra having been recalled to Court by the Emperor when he heard of the illness and death of Aurungzeb. This would not explain the haste he was in to raise men and money nor would it account for the route he took to the Court which was then at Ahmednagar. Why should he go up to Agra instead of taking the shorter and easier way through his own provinces of Bengal and Bihar? Irvine says because the route was probably unsafe.

Seir Mutaquerhin (p. 5) does not mention anything about his recall. It was on hearing of the Emperor's illness that he left Patna.

2. Harnam Singh's *Sa'a det Jawed* (*Elliot* Vol. VIII p. 340) says that his name was Mirza Rafi. He was the Dewan of Prince

general management of his affairs in Bihar for some time was left in the hands of his son Farrukhsiyar who was at Rajmahal as his nominal representative in Bengal. With a large army and eight crores of rupees he marched to Delhi where he heard of the decease of the Emperor on the 21st Feb. 1707. On the way he seized another crore and a quarter, the revenue dispatched from Bengal. Thus provided he proceeded to take possession of the city of Agra on behalf of his father who had come down from his *Subah* of Kabul, and fought a battle at Jaju near Agra in which his uncle, Azam Shah, who had declared himself Emperor at Ahmedabad was defeated and killed on the 10th of June 1707. Azim-us-shan's father, Shah Alam, was crowned Emperor with the title of Bahadur Shah.

When the Council at Calcutta heard of the death of Aurungzeb¹, they apprehended disturbances in the country, so they directed "their agents in the inland factories to come away to Calcutta". Lloyd and Cawthrop were ordered "to get all the petre in as fast as they could" and "to bribe, if necessary, to get the petre through".

Azim-us-shan who for his great valour at the battle of Jajua bestowed upon him the title of Mamtazul Mulk Sarbaland Khan. Khafi Khan and others represent him as having been left in charge of Bihar by the Prince before his departure from Patna. Harnam Singh's view is corroborated by the *Consultation Book* of the Company in which the Prince (i. e. Farukhsiyar) is represented as the sole person in authority in Bihar in 1707.

1. Which according to them took place on the 23rd of Feb. *Consultations* April 14th, 1707. In *Wilson* p. 281 the year is given as 1706 which is evidently a misprint. *Elliot* gives it as 21st. Feb. (vol. VII p. 386). Irvine makes it 3rd, March, 1707 N. S.

2. *Consultations*, 14th April, 1707.

But they could not comply with the order for there was little or no water in the river and because the Prince¹, who was levying forced contributions on the merchants would not allow them to depart. He demanded a lac from the English agents who refused to pay it. The Council wrote to the Dewan Murshid Kuli to intercede for them with the Prince "to give favour to their people at Patna and stop his people from interfering with trade". They wrote also to their *Vackeel* at Patna to inform the Prince that if they were plundered at Patna "they would take satisfaction at Hugly or anywhere else they would find it convenient so to do".² But threats and entreaties were wasted upon the Prince intent upon raising money.

On his father's accession to the throne Azim-us-shan was confirmed in his appointment as the Governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, with Murshid Kuli Khan to act as his Deputy in Bengal and Orissa. As his father wished to keep the Prince about him at Court, Azim-us-shan allowed Sarbaland Khan to continue as his Deputy in Bihar. Farukhsiyar still resided at Rajmahal as his nominal representative in Bengal. He was not acknowledged as such by the Emperor and was absolutely disregarded by Murshid Kuli Khan.

The English heard³ of the victory of Jaju and Bahadur Shah's accession to the throne, twenty days after the battle had been fought and won and finding things quiet in Bihar sent down their saltpetre boats

1. *Farukhsiyar*.

2. *Consultations*, 3rd June, 1707.

3. *Consultations*, 25th June, 1707. According to their report the battle was fought on the 8th June. Elliot gives the date as the 10th June. Irvine in his *Later Moghuls* vol I. p 26 gives the date as the 18th June.

towards the end of September but they did not reach Calcutta till 11th December. The delay was due to the shallowness of water in the River and the obstruction caused by the Foudar and Dusttickmall of Rajmahal to propitiate whom Cawthrop had to come down to Calcutta for presents nearly a week in advance of the boats.

These incessant troubles sorely tried the patience of the Company. They doubted whether it was at all profitable for them to retain the factory at Patna. But the Council at Calcutta were reluctant to part with it on account of the facilities it gave them for carrying on private trade. The exactions of the Nabob and his officers "got into the pocket of the Company" but did not affect in any way the profits of their servants who traded in their name and under the protection of the *Sanads* and *Farmans* their masters had to procure at such a heavy cost. The Company had to pay the piper but it was their servants that enjoyed the music. "You want it", they wrote to the Council later on, "for your own and for your creatures' interest." It was for this reason that we find henceforth the Company reiterating their orders to abandon the factory but the Council always put them off on some plea or another as long as they could.

The Council at Calcutta deliberated on this question of the abandonment of the factory at Patna on 19th Jany. 1708 and arrived at the conclusion that "it were best for the Company's interest to continue the factory and make a small investment so as to get all things together to come away the first next season if the affairs of Government did not appear better than at present". Cawthrop was sent back to Patna by land and was directed to write to Lloyd to be in readiness on the

1st. August, 1708. Cawthrop was seized at Rajmahal, as also some saltpetre boats coming down from Patna, by the Prince with whom the Company had opened negotiations for a *Sanad* without any results. Cawthrop drew a bill for Rs. 14,000/- upon the Company for the release of himself and the saltpetre boats. The Council were angry and at first decided not to honour the bill but afterwards they had to change their minds and on the 3rd Jany 1709 agreed to pay it, after their threat to clear their boats in the country by force and to stop Moorish ships had proved ineffective¹. Lloyd thus could not come away on the 1st. of Aug. as he had been previously ordered.

The order was reiterated in December but in February next (1709) they thought that in view of the expected *Farman* for which the Government of Fort St. George was negotiating with the Emperor at Golconda, Lloyd had better continue to stay for the present at Patna. In fact with all the difficulties and drawbacks they looked upon the Patna factory as too valuable an establishment to abandon without a very hard struggle. On 31st March 1709, Lloyd wanting help it was agreed to send Cawthrop and Gibbon to go to his assistance by land and Frankland, another factor, by the river with boats laden with such goods as the Council could send.

In May next Sarbaland Khan came to Bengal as the *locum tenens* of Murshid Kuli Khan who had gone on a visit to Delhi where he stayed nearly a year and Syed Hossein Ali Khan was appointed the Nabob of Patna².

1. Nov. 27th, 1708.

2. It looks, however, as if Sarbaland Khan for a short while was the Governor of the three Provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and that Hossein Ali Khan was not appointed till after his departure from Bengal. The *Sanad* Sarbaland Khan granted,

As usual on a change of Governors negotiations were opened by the Council with the new ruler. They applied to Sarbaland Khan for a *Sanad* preluded by a present to the new Governor worth Rs. 2000/-. Higgling about the price to be paid followed in due course which put the Nabob out of his patience. He seized the saltpetre boats at Rajmahal and threatened to levy on them the same contribution of Rs. 17,000/-¹ that the Prince had extorted from them the year before. This was the most effective way of expediting a bargain. The English had to pay Rs. 45,000/- the amount the Governor had demanded, "for the stopping of the boats up the river would prevent their sending off ships in time". The *Sanad* granted "free trade in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa" and was accompanied by the Subah's particular orders to Hugli², Rajmahal, Dacca and Murshidabad acquainting the Governors that he had given them a general *perwanah*".

allowed free trade to the English in all the three provinces. Hossein Ali Khan with his brother had fought on the side of Prince Azam at the Battle of Jaju. It was after Azam's death that the brothers transferred their services to Azim-us-shan who took them into his favour and rewarded Hossein Ali Khan with the Government of Bihar and his brother with the Government of Allahabad. All this must have taken some time. It is probable therefore that Hossein Ali Khan did not come to Patna till after the departure of Sarbaland Khan in Nov. 1709 to join his new appointment as the Foujdar of Karra (Corah).—*Iradat Khan* in *Elliot* vol. VII p. 561.

1. Cawthrop had drawn a Bill for Rs. 14,000. Rs. 17000 may be a misprint in Wilson's *Early Annals*.

2. The Foujdar of Hugli had been independent of the Governor of Bengal ever since the time of Shah Jehan (see *supra*). He was made a subordinate of the Subadar on the representation of Murshid Kuli to the Emperor of the difficulties that arose out of this anomalous arrangement. *Stewart's History* p. 374.

Sarbaland Khan left Bengal in November 1709¹ to take up the Foudjarship of Karra². Murshid Kuli Khan who had been invested with a new dignity viz, the Dewan of Bihar,³ returned to his Subah about the middle of the next year. This led the Council to direct Lloyd to meet Murshid Kuli Khan at Patna on his way back from Delhi and try to procure a *sanad* from him for both Patna and Calcutta. There was no occasion to do this for Murshid Kuli Khan seems to have respected the *sanad* granted by his *locum tenens* and left the English unmolested for a time. Syed Hossein Ali Khan was always rather favourably disposed towards the English. Prince Farrukhsiyar, when the new Governor of Calcutta entered upon his duties, favoured him with a *Seeropaw*. The relation between the English traders and the Mahomedan rulers in Bengal evidently was very friendly and cordial in the year 1710.

On Jany 30, 1710, Mr. Surman was sent to Patna with money and was directed to stop there. Apparently the Council had withdrawn their restrictions about small investments ; the Patna business was growing bigger and demanded more men and money. Soldiers had, however, still to be sent from the Fort to escort the Patna boats up and down the river.

The next year there were several changes in the factories of Patna and Calcutta and one among the Moghul officials. This last proved a source of great trouble to the English.

1. *Consultations*. Dec. 1, 1709.

2. Khafi Khan. *Elliot* VII p. 440. Farrukhsiyar found him at Karra on his way to Delhi in 1712.

3. *Consultations*. 31st March 1710. "He (Farrukhsiyar) told them that Murshid Kuli was made Dewan of Bengal and Bihar".

In December 1710 Lloyd and Cawthorp came away from Patna to be the "Zeminder" and "Secretary" respectively at Calcutta. Edward Pattle and Samuel Browne were appointed in their places the "chief" and "second" in January 1711. They were assisted by Mr. Surman and two other writers, Crisp and Pratt, who were ordered at the same time to go to Patna to learn the country language and qualify themselves for the Company's service. Edward Pattle continued to manage the affairs at Patna till the factory was closed in 1715,

A change also took place in the Calcutta Factory. On the 7th of March 1711, Sir Anthony Weltden was recalled for "the evil reputation he had come to acquire for corruption", and John Russel was appointed President and Governor of Bengal. Weltden's "governing was very short", writes Captain Hamilton, "but he took as short a way to be enriched by it by harassing the people to fill his coffers. Yet he was very shy of taking bribes, referring those honest folks who traffic that way to the discretion of his wife and daughters to make the best bargain they could about the sum to be paid and to pay the money into their hands".

Both these changes proved to be of advantage to the interests of the Company. Pattle was an able and patient officer and John Russel did not acquire an evil reputation for corruption like his predecessor. But the same thing could not be said of the appointment of a new Deputy at Rajmahal in the place of Farukhsiyar, who was recalled to Court in 1710¹. This was Izzudoulah Khan Alam called by the English Khan Jehan Bahadur who arrived at Rajmahal in June 1711 and soon proved a veritable thorn by the side of the English. As usual

1. Kafi Khan in *Elliot* Vol. VII p. 438.

the good graces of the new Governor had to be sought for and won. Application was made for a *sanad*; the usual higgling followed. The new Deputy demanded Rs. 45,000 for the Prince and Rs. 15,000 for the King. The English would offer only Rs. 30,000 and that on a promise to procure a *farman* from the Emperor in addition to the *sanad*. The Deputy refused the offer and started the usual tactics of stopping the Patna boats. The Council wrote to Azim-us-shan for help in this difficulty but he, as might have been expected, refused to interfere. The Deputy however who had probably scented political troubles "in the tainted breeze" of Delhi, closed with the offer of Rs. 30,000 and a promise for a further sum of Rs. 22,000 on his procuring the *farman*.

There were two other troubles in Bihar of a different nature. In June 1711 a rebel, probably a Pathan Zemin-dar, plundered Chupra, but fled before Nabob Hossein Ali Khan's troops, setting fire to all before him as he fled. The English saltpetre godowns were burnt and about 500 Mds. of saltpetre destroyed.

This loss was followed by another in October. A violent storm swept over Patna and "a great number of laden boats sank of which four belonged to the Company with a cargo of 8,086 Maunds of saltpetre.

Thus ended the year 1711. Early next year they were faced with still more serious troubles'. The Emperor, Bahadur Shah died on 16th Feb. 1712 and his death was followed by the usual quarrels and bloodshed.

1. This date is given in the Consultation Book. March 12th 1712. *Wilson* Vol. II p. 43.

Khafi Khan in *Elliot* Vol. VII p. 428 makes it 18th February 1711. According to Irvine it is 27th February 1712, *Later Moghuls* Vol. I.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SECOND WITHDRAWAL OF THE PATNA FACTORY.

On the 12th March 1712 the news of Bahadur Shah's death reached Calcutta *via* Patna and also a rumour that Azim-us-shan had succeeded his father. Murshid Kuli Khan declared Azim-us-shan the Emperor and struck coins in his name. But early in April came tidings to Patna of the defeat and death of Azim-us-shan. The Prince had made a gallant fight for the throne against his three brothers united through the crafty wiles of the Vizier Zulficar Khan. A battle was fought on the banks of the Ravi on the 18th of March and the Prince's elephant, wounded by a shot from a small gun, rushed into the river and disappeared with his rider. Jehander Shah became the Emperor.

On receipt of the news of the death of Bahadur Shah, the Council resolved to keep "a number of good people" to take care of their towns because they expected "parties of rogues and vagabonds to be abroad" ready to take advantage of the confusion that was sure to follow. They also tried to collect at Hugli as large a quantity of saltpetre as possible for "there was no probability", they thought, "of getting any from Patna that season". Their fears were realised, for before long they found Khan Jehan Bahadur fortifying himself at Rajmahal "and guarding passes on all sides of him

so that no *coissids*¹ could pass out of or into Patna or thence”.

On April 7, the Council heard, of the death of Azim-us-shan and of the accession to the throne of Jehander Shah. A fortnight later Farrukhsiyar who in compliance with the order for his recall to Court² had started from Rajmahal and arriving at Patna had been delaying there alleging want of money and approach of the rainy season, had himself declared the Emperor at Afzal Khan's garden with the help of Syed Hossain Ali Khan³, the Governor of Patna. He sent Rashid Khan whom he appointed his Deputy and Dewan of Bengal to fetch Murshid Kuli from his capital with “the treasure” and wrote to the Governor of Fort William to seize the Nabob if he fled to them and send him to Farrukhsiyar a prisoner. He might have as well cried for the moon as for Murshid Kuli Khan's treasure and it would have required a much more powerful Emperor than a pretender to the throne like Farrukhsiyar to make him flee from his capital. Rashid Khan who was sent to execute the Prince's order was defeated and slain and his troops killed or taken prisoners⁴.

Farrukhsiyar now had a list prepared of men at Patna who should be laid under contribution. The name of the English factory stood at the head of the list. The

1. Properly “messengers”, but here it seems to have been used in the sense of “boats”. *Kossah* means a kind of boat

2. Khafi Khan in *Elliot* Vol VII pp 438-9. Also Irvine *Later Moghuls* Vol. I p. 198. Iradat says he was in Bengal at the time of his father's death—*Elliot* Vol. VII p. 560.

3. Of the famous family of the Syeds of Barha, the name of 12 villages in the Duab (Muzzafarnagar District) which the Syeds held.—Jarrett's *Ain-i-Akbari* Vol. I p. 390.

4. *Riyazus Salastin : The Third Garden.*

Dutch were assessed at 4 lacs and Pattle, who had been directed to acknowledge the pretender, thought that 4 or 5 lacs would be demanded from the English. He was also afraid of the new Emperor's son coming against the pretender. He was already on his way. If he came, "there would be plundering on both sides". The friendly intervention of the Governor however, enabled the English to get off on payment of only Rs. 22,000. Hossein Ali also guaranteed their being left unmolested in future but the factors did not think it safe to remain at Patna. They withdrew to Singhiya and resolved to remain there till the troubles had blown over. A *hasbul-hoókum* was issued on the Amil of Hajipore "to satisfy the English and bring them back to Patna at any cost," but fortunately for them that officer was transferred before the order could be executed and they were saved from a dangerous favour. They did not feel secure even at Singhiya but kept "their spies everywhere to forewarn them of danger that they might avoid it". They made a present of Rupees 6,500 to the Nabob as a token of their gratitude for his promise to protect their factories and for sending two of his servants to Singhiya and two to *Phatua* where as well as at *Choundee*¹ they had started branch agencies. Altogether they had an exceedingly painful and anxious time of it at Patna that year.

Hossein Ali and Farrukhsiyar left Patna with a large army to fight for the throne. Jehandar Shah was defeated and Farukhsiyar was proclaimed Emperor on Jany.

1. A market town in the Barh Subdivision of Patna. See the List of Market Towns.—Montgomery Martin's *Eastern India* Vol. I last page.

19th 1713¹. The Syed brothers Hossein Ali and Abdulla became all in all in the Empire.

Ghairat Khan,² a nephew of Syed Hossein Ali Khan, had been left by the latter as the Nabob of Patna at the time of his departure for Delhi. He remained in that office till 1715. Quiet was now restored and business was resumed at Patna. Goods were sent to Patna but not openly. The Company gave them out, to secure their safe transmission, as portions of the present the Company were getting ready for the new Emperor. The saltpetre boats resumed plying; in September 13,000 Maunds of saltpetre came down the Hugli with the usual escort of soldiers from the Fort who had only one skirmish on the way in which Ensign Benson was shot dead and a soldier wounded.

On December 3, 1713 John Russel the Governor of Fort William resigned on account of his ill-health and Robert Hedges succeeded him. Frankland, the "Second" at Patna came to Calcutta to take his seat in the Council. Nobody was sent in his place for the Court had become weary of the Prince's exactions and reiterated their order for the withdrawal of the Patna factory which, they said, had become very expensive. The Council at Calcutta was not pleased with this order and they tried as before to put off the Court by taking steps for retrenching the expenses. The establishment charges (including house rent at Patna of Rs. 15/-) were reduced to Rs. 158/- As. 8 a

1. Khafi Khan gives the date as 16th Feb. 1712. *Elliot* VII p. 442. Jahandar Shah was murdered in prison on Feb 11. *Irvine's Later's Moghuls* Vol I p. 254.

2. "Kirayat Khan" of the Records. He afterwards became the Foudjar of Narnool and Governor of Agra in 1719 and died fighting for Hossein Ali Khan, his great relative. *Seir Mutaquerhin* I, p 98.

month and the diet charges of the factors to Rs. 100 only¹. "The *Corcona* (factory) however, they decided, should be continued while they stayed, for there was profit in it." No more investments were to be made but steps should be taken for winding up the business soon. This could not be done at once for there were many debts left unrealized and it would take time to call them all in as many of the rich merchants had left Patna and the few that had stayed behind were too impoverished to meet their liabilities. They were not able to realize them till 1717. Then they owed money themselves. Their creditors would not allow them to leave the place till they had paid up all their debts.

Meanwhile it had been decided to send an embassy to the new Emperor for a *farman* which the English yet hoped would put an end to the exactions of the Nabobs and vexations caused by his officers. A letter was written to Farrukhsiyar on the 27th March 1713 for a safe conduct for the embassy. It arrived on 19th October and was followed by an *hasbul hookum* on the Subedar of Bengal, "ordering him to permit the English to trade as formerly in Aurungzeb's time and not molest them."

The embassy consisted of Mr. John Surman the chief² who though only a "writer" had been taken into the Patna Council as "he was very sufficiently qualified to give

1. In 1758 the minimum diet money allowed to a civilian was 20 Rs. a month. *Long p. 131.*

2. John Surman was elected "writer" in 1706, was sent to Patna where he was taken into the Council in 1712. He returned from the Embassy in 1717 and resigned the Company's service; was re-appointed, and returned from England in 1721. Died at Calcutta in 1724. He had a fine garden at Kidderpore. Fragments of his valuable "Diary" were discovered in a "public necessary house" in 1753.

his advice and every way fitt to assist those troublesome time", Khoja Sarhad, the rich Armenian merchant, "Second", Edward Stephenson,¹ the Sub-accountant at Calcutta, "Third," Hugh Barker of Patna, the "Secretary" and William Hamilton, the Surgeon.² The boats containing the presents³ started on the 19th of April 1714 *via* Patna where the Chief of the Embassy then was. On September 23, bills for Rs. 100,000 were despatched to Patna to pay off the debts and enable Surman to start. With the help of this money Pattle was able to wind up the business. The factory was closed and Pattle returned to Calcutta in January 1715 where he died in March following.

The Embassy reached Delhi on September 5, 1715. The negotiations took up nearly two years, at the end of which the ambassadors obtained the Emperor's *farman*. Lavish distribution of presents among the courtiers and the lucky cure effected by Dr. Hamilton on the person

1. *List of the Company's servants in Bengal* in 1712.

2. William Hamilton was appointed Surgeon of Calcutta on 27th December, 1711. Died on 4th. December, 1717, of a putrid fever and was buried in St. James's Churchyard. There are two inscriptions one in English and the other in Persian on the slab which has now been placed in the Charnock Masoleum.

Like Dr. Broughton and Dr. Holwell, Hamilton was one of those medical men who, in the early days of the East India Company, took a prominent part in public affairs much to the advantage of their masters.

3. The presents had originally been collected by Governor Pitt of Madras for presentation to Bahadur Shah when he was at Golconda in 1708. They could not be sent on account of the sudden departure of the Emperor from the Deccan after the death of Kambaksh. They were then despatched to Bengal be forwarded to the Emperor through Zain-uddin Khan, the Foujdar of Hugli, a great friend of Pitt.

of the Emperor who had been suffering from an obstinate disease enabled the ambassadors to attain their end. Great was the jubilation of the Council when the news arrived of the signing of the *farman*. When the embassy returned to Calcutta on 23rd November, 1717, it was met by the President and his Council at Tribeni, a village some 30 miles up the river from Calcutta, and the ambassadors were taken back to the Factory with high ceremonies and great rejoicing.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SECOND RESTORATION OF THE PATNA FACTORY.

Ghairat Khan, the Nabob of Bihar, left Patna in 1715 and was succeeded by Mir Jumla.¹ His original name was Abidulla or Ubaid-ulla and he had been the Cazy of Dacca and afterwards of Patna. He had become a great favourite of the Emperor Farrukhsiyar and had come to acquire so great an influence upon him as to excite the jealousy of the Syed brothers who had him banished from Court and sent away as the Governor of Patna. The position of the Nabob of Patna had of late become an exceedingly uncomfortable one. The treasury had been drained dry and people impoverished by the exactions of Azim-us-shan and Farrukhsiyar. The former had laid the country under contribution and left the Subah with 8 crores of rupees. Six years later, before the country had time to recover, Farrukhsiyar began his exactions. He had started for Delhi with 75 lacs raised by forced contributions and 2 lacs borrowed from the merchants of Patna.² In 1709 the *Dewanee* of Bihar had been conferred upon Murshid Kuli Khan who was not a man to be intimidated or coaxed into parting with the government money for any purpose he did not approve of. In fact as the *Dewan* of

1. Khafi Khan in *Elliot* VII pp. 443, 449 and 463. *Seir Mutaquerhin* Vol. I p. 59.

Mir Jumla left Delhi in December, 1714 and returned on 16th January 1716—*Irvine's Later Moghuls*.

2. Khafi Khan. *Elliot* Vol. VII p. 440.

three provinces and Nazim of two¹ he was a much greater man than the Nabob of Patna and previous experience had shown that it was dangerous² to measure strength with him. Thus with a very restricted³ control upon an almost empty treasury and a country with its wealth nearly all wrung out, the Nabob of Patna had to meet the clamour for arrears of pay of a large standing army and a host of disbanded soldiers that had been levied in the late wars "who went about pillaging the country and exercising violence even in the middle of its capital where they put under contribution the poor people as well as the nobility"; and the cry for redress raised by the peasantry was worse than the clamour of the unpaid soldiers. Thus what was taking place at Delhi was happening on a smaller scale in the provinces.⁴

1. See *supra*.

2. See *Supra*, how the army under Rashid Khan sent against him was destroyed.

3. Akbar instituted the office of the Subedar who was both the Nazim and the Dewan and possessed unlimited powers. Aurungzeb insisted upon keeping these offices perfectly separate with a view to prevent too much power from accumulating in the hands of a single officer. The Nazim's duties were briefly to defend and protect the country from foreign enemies or domestic insurrections and enforce a strict obedience to the laws. The Dewan had to look after the collection of revenue and disbursements of all requisite expenses. The Nazim wielded the sword, the Dewan held the purse strings.

Stewart's History p. 352. *Dow's History of Hindustan* Vol. III. Appendix. *Riyas Salatin*. The Third Garden. *Wheeler's Short History* p. 214.

4. *Seir Mutaquerhin* Vol. I p. 97

Khafi Khan—*Elliot* Vol. VII p. 459.

Mir Jumla who did not like to remain away from Court found the state of things at Pátna such that he beat a precipitate retreat in a covered palanquin, like a woman, followed by a host of clamouring soldiers. On the 3rd of March, 1715, he had not yet arrived at Patna. Rupchand, the Vackeel of the English, was ordered on that date to meet him at Benares. On April 16, 1716 Rupchand was discharged from the Company's service as there was no need for him, Mirjumla having left Patna. His stay, therefore, was very short¹ but it was long enough to win for him universal detestation and enable him to make confusion worse confounded which he did by raising a fresh body of Moghul troops and mismanaging the revenue. He was received on his return to Delhi in the same way as Essex was received by Elizabeth on his return from Ireland without permission—with coldness and disfavour and was in a few days packed off to Multan, his native province.²

Sarbaland Khan³ was next appointed the Subedar of Patna. This was his second administration. In 1709 he had gone to Karra as its Foujdar and had helped Jehandar Khan with a part of the Bengal Revenue he had seized on its way to Delhi. He had however subsequently offered his services to the new Emperor and had been taken into favour by the Syed brothers.⁴ Sarbaland was a strong man, an able general and a good administrator. He succeeded in restoring some sort of

1. He returned to Delhi on 16th January, 1716. Irvine's *Later Moghuls*.

2. So says Seir Mutaquerhin p. 99. According to Khafi Khan he was sent to the Punjab. *Elliot* VII p. 458.

3. Khafi Khan. *Elliot* Vol. VII p. 440.

4. Harnam Singh. *Elliot* Vol. VIII p. 340.

Khafi Khan. *Elliot* VII p. 460.

order in the distracted country and quieting to a certain extent the clamouring soldiery by paying the arrears of their pay out of his own pocket. "He had always been indigent" and he very nearly impoverished himself in serving his master who by way of rewarding him took away from him his rich *jaigir* and bestowed it on Mir Jumla. Towards the close of the year 1718 he was called away to Delhi to plot against the Syed brothers,¹ and was succeeded by Nusarat Yar Khan, one of the principal Syeds of Barrah². The storm that had been brewing for some time now burst upon Delhi. The Syed brothers disgusted with the persistent attempts of the Emperor to throw off their yoke had him imprisoned, blinded and afterwards strangled (Jany, 1719). Two nonentities were placed upon the throne one after

1. The infamous Cashmerian favourite of the Emperor, Murad Mahomed, afterwards called Iticad Khan, advised the Emperor to summon to the capital three powerful Subedars. Nizamul Mulk, Fateh Jung of Moradabad, Raja Ajit Singh of Ahmedabad and Sarbuland Khan of Azimabad, and with their help to overthrow the powerful Syeds. When Sarbuland Khan found that he had been called upon to depose Syed Abdulla Khan only to set up Iticad Khan as the Wazir he refused to join the conspiracy, threw up his *Mansab*, sold every thing he had to pay his debts and resolved to become a *fakir*. Hossein Ali Khan hearing of this came to his assistance and made him the Governor of Kabul. (*Khafi Khan in Elliot VII 473*). He afterwards became the Governor of Guzerat and then of Allahabad under Mahomed Shah and was entrusted by Nadir Shah with the duty of collecting the fines imposed upon the people of Delhi. He died covered with years and honour in 1741. *Harnam Singh*. VIII p. 340).

2. *Seir Mutaquerhin* Vol. II. Irvine says it was Khan Zaman Khan who was superseded by Nizam-ul-Mulk in February 1719 but Nizam-ul-mulk never left Delhi—Irvine's *Later Moghuls*.

another, their reigns occupying only a few months in all, from Feb. to Aug, 1719. In October another insignificant prince, Mahomed Shah, was placed upon the throne. Hossein Ali Khan was assassinated and his brother imprisoned and murdered. The power they had wielded passed into the hands of Nizamul-Mulk and the puppet changed hands.¹

Nusrat Yar Khan was coming to the assistance of his great chief when he heard of his assassination. He forthwith made his peace with the Emperor and his Vizier whom he met near Agra and was taken into favour. He was raised to the grade of five thousand horse with an addition of two thousand more to his command and honoured with the title of Rakneddoulah.² The Government of Azimabad was bestowed upon Murshid Kuli Khan who had sent to the newly crowned Emperor rich presents and *Nazarana* of immense value. Murshid Kuli Khan thus became the Nabob and Dewan of the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, i.e., the Subedar proper of the three provinces.³

The confusion and disorder that prevailed in Bihar was one of the reasons that led the Court to insist upon the withdrawal of the Factory at Patna in 1715. Pattle as we have seen left Patna in January but he had not been able to collect the debts. So Surman on his way back from Delhi was directed to halt at Patna "to get

1. V. A. Smith's *Oxford History* p. 227.

2. *Seir Mutaquerhin* pp. 183 and 229.

3. *Stewart's History* p. 403. He refers to Scott's *History of the Deccan* A. D. 1719,

Riyazus Salatin says it was the government of Orissa that was now conferred upon him which is evidently a mistake as he had not government given to him years ago. See *supra*.

in the Company's debts and performing everything else for finally closing the business there."

But the Council at Calcutta evidently did not take the decision of the Court as final. They still had hopes of re-opening the factory and that at no very distant date; so, instead of letting their houses at Singhiya fall into disrepair and decay as they had done that of Hugli which had been abandoned for good, they kept some servants at Singhiya, Fatuah and Choundee "to keep possession of the Company's house and grounds", to look after the repairs and do some refining of saltpetre earth which was sold for about Rs. 200. They did not grudge the charges at Patna that amounted for 14 months from January 1715 to March 1716 to Rs. 267 As.12". The houses must be kept "swept and garnished" and ready for reoccupation, for Patna, affording facilities for private trade in saltpetre and opium was too lucrative a place for the Company's servants to part with.

The Court had based their decision for abandonment on the following grounds :

1. The establishment was an expensive one. The factors in those days were given to high living. The retrenchment enforced in 1713 was evidently not sufficient to meet the situation. But this was not peculiar to Patna. Other factories had been guilty of equally lavish expenditure and the Court never wearied of insisting on strict economy though in vain.

2. The factory was exposed to the dangers of political revolutions at Delhi and liable to heavy exactions by the Governors both at Patna and Rajmahal.

3. The losses through exactions and plunder had to be borne by the Company while the Company's servants carrying on private trade reaped all the benefits of their costly *sanads* and heavy bribes and made large profits.

But the changes that had taken place recently in Bihar weakened the force of these arguments.

The establishment of Farrukhsiyar on the throne of Delhi with Hossein Ali Khan, a former friend of the English, wielding great influence in the Empire, the restoration of peace and order in the province by a strong ruler like Sarbaland Khan and lastly the *farman* of Farrukhsiyar they had managed to secure, would free them from the fear of plunder and exactions. The expenses of the Factory had been greatly retrenched; they could be still further reduced by the employment of native officers who armed with the *dustucks* signed by the President of Fort William would be as safe from the oppression of the Nabob's officers as an European servant of the Company. Lastly, though the demand for saltpetre had been slightly reduced on the close of the French War in 1713, it was still very great and it was not possible to procure it in large quantities without a regular establishment at Patna. They had tried to procure it by contract with the native merchants, but found that they charged an exorbitant price which left little margin for their profit. On 28th Jany. 1718, a month after the death of President Hedges and a fortnight after the appointment of his successor Samuel Feake, the Council had to purchase saltpetre from a broker paying the high rate of Rs. 5/3/-¹ per Maund, the owners alleging extraordinary charges in clearing it at Rajmahal. The Council plied the Court with all these arguments and they agreed to re-open the Factory in June 1718.

The Patna factory was re-established under circumstances that may be regarded as generally favourable.

1. Even 20 years later the price of a Maund was only Rs. 3/8/- *Bengal Past and Present* Vol. VII.

By the year 1718, some sort of order had been restored in Bihar by Sarbaland Khan. In 1719 Mahomed Shah ascended the throne of Delhi. Though a weak and feeble monarch his reign proved a short lull after the storm. It seemed as if the people had become weary of incessant quarrels and dissensions, constant bloodshed and frequent changes in the government and consequent insecurity of life and property and had resolved to have quiet and peace. Shortly after the accession of Mahomed Shah, Murshid Kuli Khan became the Subedar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The astute Nabob understood the value of external commerce which had added so much to the wealth of the country though he was too keen a politician not to view with jealousy the fortified factories of the English, their steady endeavour to expand the three villages they had acquired and the way they tried to monopolize trade by claiming the privilege of carrying it on duty-free.¹ Exactions and occasional acts of oppression were the means he employed to put the English traders on a par with his other subjects. Still their trade flourished and they understood that his attitude towards them was generally favourable, so that when he died in 1725 they "lamented his death."²

Lastly, they had gained important privileges by the farman of 1719, the result of the Surman Embassy, the most important among which were the following :

1. *Stewart's History* pp. 394-5.

2. "We find you lament the death of Jaffar Khan and wish that he may be succeeded by his son-in-law Shuja Khan who you say had on many occasions shown the English friendship and favour." *Court to Calcutta*. Feb. 21, 1728.

1. A *Dustuck* or passport signed by the President of Calcutta should exempt the goods it specified from being stopped or examined by the officers of the Bengal Government on any pretence.

2. The Nabob's Officers of the Mint at Murshidabad should at all times, when required, allow three days in the week for the coinage of the English Company's money.

3. All persons whether European or native who might be indebted or accountable to the Company should be delivered up to the Presidency of Calcutta, on the first demand.

4. The English might purchase the lordship of 38 villages with the same immunities as Prince Azim-us-Shan had permitted them in the purchase of Sutanuttee, Kalikata and Govindapore."

It is true that Murshid Kuli threw so many obstacles in the way of the free operation of the farman that many of its provisions became nugatory. The English could never acquire any of the 38 villages adjoining Calcutta for Murshid Kuli "privately threatened the proprietors of the land with denunciation of his vengeance if they parted with their ground to the English upon any terms that should be offered." This after all was not regarded by the Court as any great loss as they were themselves averse to "much territorial expansion,"

The issue of *Dustucks* was restricted by Murshid Kuli only to goods taken down to the ships in the harbour or from them to the inland settlements of the English who were thus debarred from "carrying the produce or manufacture of one part of the province into another without paying duties". This did not interfere with the Company's commerce though it seriously handicapped private trade carried on by their servants.

As regards the other two privileges the Nabob made such difficulties as might be expected from the ruler of a country forced to obey orders he did not like. The following incident though it occurred after the receipt of the *rescript* of the farman but before the return of the embassy with the original may give some idea of them. Twenty chests of treasure were sent to the Murshidabad factory to be coined at the Nabob's mint into the currency of the province. Relying upon the provisions of the *farman* the factors did not think it necessary to ask for Jaffar Khan's order on the Mint. The officers of the Mint refused to coin the treasure and no order could be procured from the Nabob as his Mutsuddy, Raghunandan was in a dying condition and "till he recovered or was dead they could not tell who to apply themselves to." When after a long delay they at last made their petition to the Nabob and showed him the copy of the farman, he resenting their presumption, refused to regard it as authentic and rejected their prayer.¹

But inspite of these restrictions and obstructions the farman of Farrukhsiyar proved to be of immense benefit to the English. Latterly they had been carrying on trade on "the contract system".² "Contracts were entered into with the merchants of the country who received a part of the money (usually 70 to 75 p. e. of it)³ in advance which was called *Dadney*. These

1. *Consultations*. 12th July 1717.

2. Bolts' *Considerations on Indian Affairs* pp. 90-1.
Wheeler's Early Records p. 224.

3. Sometimes when the Company had not money enough to make these advances they had to allow an interest upon them.

"The merchants.....objected against contracting with us

merchants who were known by the name of *Ladney-merchants* contracted under penalties to deliver the goods at stated times and prices at the Company's principal settlements and were, of course, amenable to the laws of the country when they or their agents were guilty of irregular practices." Hitherto it had been very difficult to bring the defaulting merchants to book through the *Cazis*, and there were serious troubles when the Company's servants took the law into their own hands. But now that the merchants, "indebted or accountable to the Company were to be delivered to the Presidency of Calcutta," there was hardly any fear of losses through bad debts. And the *Dustucks* gave the native agents as much immunity from the obstructions and vexations caused by the *faujdar*s and *chowkeydar*s as the Company's boats, guarded by the Company's soldiers, ever enjoyed. Business, therefore, was carried on on a much wider scale and with less expense and more profit.

The Patna factory, thus, was re-opened under auspicious circumstances. But it had lost its former importance, it had ceased to occupy that prominent place it had hitherto held among the English settlements in the Bay. Though subordinated to the factory at Hugli it had been much looked up to as a half-way station to Delhi through which all news from the metropolis came and went, as a place where the factors came into direct contact with the Nabob who was sometimes also the Viceroy of the three provinces, as a settlement whose closer acquaintance with the politics of Delhi shaped

because we have not money to advance as usual which advance uses to be from 70 to 75 p. c. on the contract and no arguments would prevail with them to contract till we agreed to allow them interest of 1 p. c. on half the amount of what they shall contract for"—*Consultations* : April 18, 1717.

and guided the policy of the council at Hugli or Calcutta. This importance was now gone, for the centre of interest, so far as Bengal was concerned, had been shifted from Delhi to Murshidabad. From the time of Murshid Kuli Khan, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa had become one great kingdom practically independent of Delhi. The Nabobs of Patna, except on one occasion for 5 years, were mere deputies of the Nabobs of Murshidabad. People in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa no longer cared what happened at Delhi; they had their eyes fixed on the Musnud of Murshidabad. The plunder of Delhi by the Marhattas, the invasion and sacking of the metropolis by Nadir Shah, the devastating irruptions of the Afghans into Northern India, produced only a mild flutter of excitement in the far-off provinces at the mouth of the Ganges¹ and had no other effect upon them than to make them discontinue payment of the revenue into the exchequer of Delhi. The trade of Patna continued as important as ever but the introduction of the contract system had reduced the importance of the factory, and its history, losing its political and sensational character, sank into a monotonous record of buying and selling, of profit and loss.

As Patna lost, Calcutta gained in importance. The factory there was defended by a fortress that was being strengthened and extended year after year. It was situated in the midst of an estate that was about six miles across, that contained about 10 or 12 thousand souls and brought in a fair revenue. Within the town the English were supreme, enjoying all the powers of a king. Its position at the mouth of the

1. *Riyayus Salatin* dismisses the invasion of Nadir Shah with only a bare mention of it and so does Golam Hossain in his *Seir*.

river with the ships lying about enabled it to inspire respect and instil better sense into the hostile Nabobs and *Foujdars* by holding out to them threats to destroy the Moorish vessels on the sea. This growing importance of Calcutta threw Patna very much into the shade and made her history meagre and un-interesting.

CHAPTER XIX.

PATNA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

We have seen how on the accession of Mahomed Shah to the throne of Delhi, Murshid Kuli Khan was invested with the government of Bihar in addition to his other governments.¹ Who his deputy was in Bihar we do not know. He had placed his son-in-law Shuja Khan in Orissa and his grand-son Serferaz Khan, in Bengal. Probably he did not appoint any deputy Nazim in Bihar but managed its affairs himself with the help of a Dewan.²

1. *Stewart's History*, p. 394.

2. *Riyayus Salatin* says that it was with the Government of Orissa Murshid was invested in 1720. This was evidently a mistake for a few pages before he writes that when Azim-us-Shan was the Viceroy, Murshid was acting as the Governor of Bengal and Orissa and had conferred the government of Orissa on one of his relatives. *Orissa*, therefore, must have been a mistake for *Bihar*.

Golam Hossain does not mention the fact at all. "I am not informed" he writes, "which governor succeeded Masarat Yar Khan in the government of that province (Azimabad). I only know that in 1140 A. H. (1733) Fakeruddoulah, brother of Jaffar Khan, having obtained the government of that province remained in it five years." p. 272.

It is possible that "he was not informed" because no new governor had been appointed but Murshid Kuli Khan who had already been the Dewan was now made the Nazim as well. If it be correct that Murshid Kuli was invested with the government of Bihar it is more likely that Bihar should cease to be an appendage of Bengal at his death and not three years later as Golam Hossain would make it out. The date of Fakeruddoulah's appointment as given by Stewart *viz.*, 1725 is correct.

When Murshid Kuli died in 1725 he was succeeded in Bihar by Fakeruddoulah, brother to Jaffar Khan of the Court of Delhi. He was illiterate, proud, short-tempered and occasionally light-headed. His rule was oppressive, and it bred disturbances. His cruel treatment of Shah Abdullah, an influential man of Patna, who was compelled to flee to the Nabob of Oudh and the insult he offered to the brother of the Khan Douran who was living at Patna in the garb of a fakir brought about his dismissal in 1730. The government of Bihar was conferred upon Shujah Khan who had succeeded Murshid Kuli Khan in Bengal; and Bihar again formed a part of the viceroyalty of Bengal.

Fakeruddoulah seems to have left the English alone. But the unruly zemindars caused some trouble. The Rajah of Chuckawar who had his capital at Samboo opposite Monghyr "laid everything that passed on the river by Monghyr under contribution and put the European settlements to an annual expense of a large armament to escort their trade to and from Patna."¹ But the attitude of the government both in Bengal and Bihar was, on the whole, friendly and the Court expressed their satisfaction on the report of the Council at Fort William of their "being pretty easy with the country Government notwithstanding the unsettled condition of the country."² To maintain this friendly relation the the Company's servants were advised not to rely too much on the *farman* they had recently obtained but also "to be careful to keep up a good understanding with the Nabob so as good words and respectful demeanour, without paying too dear for it, would

1. Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events*, p. 68.

2. *General to Bengal*, 14th Feb. 1727. *Auber's Account*, p. 26.

contrive." An occasional putting on a face of power and resolution, when softer methods and applications had failed, might also prove very effective. The servants took the cue and moulded their conduct according to this advice of their masters.

The business prospered ; the branch factories at *Phatua (Futwa)*, *Choundee* and *Beguserai* were re-opened and five new subordinate agencies were started in different parts of the province of Bihar.¹ In 1728 a brick godown was built at Patna to secure saltpetre against the danger of fire which was of frequent occurrence in those days of thatched sheds and congested bazaars.² In 1733 the Patna godowns were re-covered and considerably enlarged.

Aliverdi Khan was appointed Governor of Bihar by Shuja Khan, the Viceroy, in 1730 and he ruled over it till 1740. Shuja Khan was favourably disposed towards the English. "He allowed the English and other Europeans to enjoy the privileges that had been granted to them by the Emperor Farukhsiyar or by the former governors."³ There was only one quarrel between Shuja and the English and that was the work of the infamous Pir Khan, the Foujdar of Hugli. The *foujdar* was an oppressive ruler and a very covetous man. In 1733 he seized an English boat laden with bales of silk and cloth but it was taken away from him by a party of soldiers dispatched from Calcutta. Pir Khan represented the affair as a serious flouting of the Nabob's authority and the Subedar "prohibited the natives from supplying Calcutta or any of the subordinate factories with grain."³

1. *Martin's Eastern India*, Vol. I, p. 354.

2. *Court to Bengal*, Feb. 14, 1728. *Wilson's Fort William*, p. 124.

3. *Stewart's History*, p. 426. *Riyaz : Garden* III.

The English were compelled to purchase peace by presenting to the Nabob three lacs, through their Chief at Cossimbazar.

While desirous of allowing the English to enjoy all the privileges they were legally entitled to, he was at the same time "attentive that they should not clandestinely partake of greater immunities and advantages than the terms of the *firmaunds* or grants, gave them a claim to. To this end he increased the number of *Chowkies* (places for receipts of customs) to twenty upon the several rivers whereas before his government there were only two, Bux Bunder (Hugli) and Azimgunj."¹

Shuja Khan also did the English a great service by driving the Ostend Company which had come to Bengal in 1724, out of the country and demolishing their factory at Bankeybazaar opposite Chandernagore in 1733.²

In Bihar Aliverdi Khan followed a similar policy as regards the European settlements there and introduced a vigorous system of administration the province had not seen for a long time. A band of robbers called *Bunjerahs* who had entered the country on the pretext of purchasing grain and other commodities, laid the places through which they passed under heavy contributions and plundered even the collectors of revenues. The Zemindars of Betiah, Chuckawar and Bhojepore were in open revolt. Aliverdi routed the *Bunjerahs* and made them disgorge their plunder and brought the

1. Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events*, p. 56.

2. So says Stewart ; but the factors seemed to have lingered about their factory till the Marhatta invasions in the next reign when being accused of a collusion with the Marhattas the Chief had to flee from Bankeybazaar and take refuge in Pegu—Wilson's *Fort William*, Vol. I.

refractory zemindars under control. The means he employed for compassing his ends would not bear scrutiny but they were certainly very effective. Holwell's story of the boat he found at Monghyr floating down the river laden with the severed heads of the prince of Chuckawar and his 30 attendants who had gone to pay their yearly tribute to Aliverdi and had been treacherously assassinated, whilst at the same time their capital was sacked and burnt, was an instance of the *modus operandi* of Aliverdi in his treatment of his enemies.¹ In Bengal the memory of Murshid Kuli's *Baikuntha*² was yet too fresh in the hearts of the zemindars for them to defy the power of his able successors. The zemindars and the subordinate officers of State being thus brought under discipline the river became comparatively safe and the boats of the English factors plied up and down in greater security than heretofore.

The Company tried to make their business more profitable by reducing the expenses of the factories and curtailing private trade. They were not altogether successful in respect of the former for we find them denouncing luxurious living and holding out admonitions and punishments for infringement of their order, over and over again afterwards and they were averse to or afraid of interdicting the latter. Yet their efforts in these directions could not but have a wholesome effect upon the service generally. The Court strongly condemned the extravagant way of living "which had obtained such deep-rooting among the Company's servants", and insisted upon putting down with an iron-

1. Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events*, p. 68.

2. Properly "Paradise" an euphemism for the place where the refractory Zemindars were confined.

3. *Court to Bengal*, Dec. 3, 1731.—*Auber*, p. 33.

hand "the foppery of having a set of music at the table and a coach and six with guards and running footmen, as we are informed, is now practised not only by the president but some of inferior rank." They followed up their admonitions with some very drastic measures. They refused to sanction the purchase of "a chaise and pair the President, Mr. Deane of Calcutta had charged to the Company as costing Rs. 1,100¹." and made President Feake pay from his own pocket his extravagant table expenses.²

They were afraid however of raising a storm of opposition³ by openly checking private trade which they had allowed in respect of certain specified articles to enable their servants to eke out their poor salaries which they would not raise and make respectable. "We are informed," they wrote in 1731, "that great mischiefs happen to our interest as well as to your own destruction by the private trade of India, as it is at present and has for some years past been carried on, to a much greater degree than it should have been."⁴ But instead of denouncing and punishing it they contented themselves with merely declaring that they would "give their opinion upon that head by a later ship."⁴ This attitude towards private trade, however, received some emphasis

1. *Court to Bengal*, 7th Jan. 1725—Anber, p. 28.

2. *Court to Bengal*, Jany. 29, 1724. Wilson's *Fort William*, Vol. I, pp. 114-15 note. The table expenses contained items like the following :—

For feeding goats, rabbits and deer	...	Rs. 53
For oil and pickles	...	Rs. 49
For 23 servants in Governor's cookroom	Rs. 69	a month
For drinking water from Nudia—	Rs. 515	etc., etc.

3. *Court to Bengal*, Dec. 3, 1731 *Auber* p. 32.

4. *Idem*.

from the dismissal of President Deane and six members of his Council by the same letter for having failed "to study to advance the Company's interest by all possible means."

The Patna factory, however, had a new rival to contend with about this time. The French who had come to Bengal in 1686 and had established their first factory at Cossimbazaar about 1707 and then next at Dacca 1722,¹ now made their way to Patna. The French factory at Patna must have been established sometime between 1720 and 1725.² In 1735 they had already made a good progress in business which caused considerable anxiety to the Court. We find them exhorting their servants: "Now the French were settled at Patna, our chief and council must double their diligence and keep all the *assamies* they can, true to our interest and advance money liberally but with caution." "A year's stock of saltpetre should always be stored before-hand at Calcutta provided it could be done without advancing the price."³

1. *Bengal Past and present*, Vol. VII, p. 122.

2. Captain Hamilton who visited Bengal about 1720 does not mention the French Factory at Patna. "Patna is the next town frequented by Europeans, where the English and Dutch have factories for saltpetre and raw silk."

Chevalier D'Albert writing in 1725 says "The French and Dutch had also factories at Patna."—*Hill's Three Frenchmen in Bengal*.

The French Factory ceased to exist after 1758.

3. *Court to Bengal*, 12. December, 1735—Auber p. 35.

CHAPTER XX.

ALIVERDI KHAN, THE VICEROY OF THE THREE PROVINCES. THE MARHATTA INVASIONS.

Shujah Khan died in 1739 and was succeeded by his son Serferaz Khan, a worthless profligate who soon alienated from him the sympathy of his father's officers, forfeited the love of his people and gave mortal offence to the great banker Fateh Chand Jagat Set whose family had enjoyed great distinction under Aurungzeb and having settled at Murshidabad wielded great influence during the late Nabob's reign.¹ A conspiracy was formed against the wicked Nabob of which Aliverdi Khan, who had already secured an order from Mahomed Shah conferring upon him the government of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, was not slow to take advantage. Marching from Patna at the head of an army he met and overthrew the forces of Serferaz Khan at Gheriah. Serferaz was killed in the battle and Aliverdi Khan became the Governor of the three provinces which he ruled till his death in 1756.

Aliverdi had appointed his son-in-law Zain-ud-din Ahmed, otherwise known as Haibat Jung, the Governor of Bihar before he left Patna.² His departure from the

1. The original home of the Sets was Multan. They had settled at Murshidabad about 1727. The title "Jagat Set" was conferred upon Fateh Chand by Mahomed Shah. Serferaz Khan is said to have demanded a sight of Jagat Set's daughter-in-law who was famous for her beauty.

2. Zain-ud-din had been the Governor of Rajmahal under Shujah.

province was a signal for insurrection and rebellion. The unruly Raja of Bhojepore assisted by the Afghan Governor of Sahabad opened the ball. This revolt was followed by the invasion of the Marhattas who overran the whole province and threatened Patna but did not take it. What they left undone was completed by the Afghan rebels who sacked and burnt the city which was shortly after occupied by the Nabob of Oudh who had been called in to help the governor to beat off the rebels and who, for his rapacity, proved a worse enemy than the rebels themselves. Nabob Aliverdi who though sore bested himself, came to the assistance of his son-in-law, suppressed the rebellion, beat off the invaders and restored order in the country. But the invaders returned again and again, insurrections and rebellions broke out afresh both in Bihar and Bengal and Aliverdi's whole life was spent in struggling with them. To add to his difficulties the Nabob had to face intrigues and treachery in his own family. In 1748 Haibat Jung who had been plotting for independence with the help of the Afghans under Shumshere Khan, was assassinated by his ally who took the city and subjected the governor's father to a cruel and lingering death. Thirteen years later this house of Haji Ahmed¹ witnessed another and a more dreadful act of inhumanity. The dauntless old Nabob marched up from Bengal, suppressed the rebellion and wanted to make his other son-in-law and nephew Syed Ahmed Khan, the Governor of Bihar. But he was overruled by the importunities of his wife and his own doting fondness for his grandson, Sirajud-doulah, and he appointed him Governor of Bihar with

1. Haji Ahmed was the elder brother of Aliverdi Khan. He came to Patna when the conspiracy against Serferz Hossain Khan was in progress.

Raja Janakiram as his deputy. Ahmed Khan was made Governor of Purneah.

Raja Janakiram died in 1753 and was succeeded by Raja Ramnarain who governed Bihar practically as an independent ruler till he was imprisoned by Mir Cosim in 1763 and "despatched to the regions of non-existence being thrown into the Ganges with a bag of sand fastened to his neck."

Aliverdi's policy as regards the English was to let them alone as far as he could. He had troubles enough on land, he said, without setting the sea also on fire. But he was not the man to forego any of his prerogatives because of the dangers he had to face and the difficulties by which he was always beset. When the French War broke out in Europe and set the English and French settlements of the Coromandel Coast by the ears and again when, two years later, in spite of there being peace in Europe, the English and the French in Southern India started fighting, Aliverdi would not permit hostilities to be carried on in his province. The long wars he had to carry on all through his reign against the Afghan rebels, refractory zemindars and Marhatta invaders forced him to raise money by heavy exactions. Everybody was laid under contribution; even "Jagat Set's house who had so eminently promoted Aliverdi's usurpation was often fleeced to the malicious joy of all who were friendly to Shuja Khan's family."¹ The English factories were not spared. But they had no special cause of complaint; their fate was the fate of all. Moreover "all that the English paid to the Nabob from his accession did not exceed £100,000

1. *Seir Mutaquerhin*, Vol. II.

2. Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events*, p. 151.

which was not on an average two in a hundred of the amount of their investment during the interval.”¹ They fared, therefore, much better than the people of the country, the more so as both the Marhatta invaders and the Afghan rebels seemed to have treated the English factors and their possessions with a special consideration.

The Marhattas plundered Tannah forts but let alone Calcutta; they plundered Bihar up to the very gates of the capital but there is nothing to show that the English factory was in any way molested. On one occasion only a Company's boat laden with 300 bales of silk was seized by the Marhattas near Cutwa. On representation being made to Janoji, the Marhatta Captain, through Umichand, he tried to recover them, “but as they had been dispersed among many and divers places they could not be found.”² “The prisoners that were brought from the boat,” he wrote, “never made use of the Company's name, otherwise I should have stopped all the goods.” This happened in 1748. Some five years before this when Bhaskar Pandit, the Marhatta Captain was carrying on his depredations far and wide through Bengal and Bihar from his headquarters at Cutwa,

1. *Orme's History*, Vol. II.

2. Captain Fenwick in his “Letter on the Company's Affairs in Bengal in 1747-8” accuses President Braddyll “of private understanding with the Marhattas.” “When the Company's silk” he writes, “was plundered at Cutwa (an article the Marhattas did not know what to do with) it was stolen into Calcutta afterwards and at this time a great part lies unsold at Madras”—*Wilson's Fort William*, Vol. I, p. 199.

It was no wonder therefore that Janoji could not recover the goods.

Umichand also had not failed to profit by this incident.

Mr. Forrestie who had been at Patna, probably looking after the reconstruction of the factory there after its destruction by fire in 1739, was asked by the Council at Fort William to come down to Calcutta and take charge of the fortifications that were being erected with the permission of the Nabob. His boat was seized by a party of Marhattas near Nadia and plundered of his belongings, his loss, according to his own estimate, amounting to 300 Madras Rupees. The Company in view of the fact that Mr. Forrestie "was very ingenious and, knowing" "re-imbursed the 300 Rs. the Marhattas took from him."¹ These were the only instances of outrage known to have been committed by the Marhattas on the English.

The Afghan rebels were equally considerate. When Shumshere Khan took the city of Patna and yielded it up to unrestrained massacre and rapine, we do not hear of the English factors having been treated with cruelty or their factory looted. When the rebel leader marched out of the city to meet the Bengal army, he "plundered the Dutch factory at Futwa of white cloth and other goods to the amount of Rs.65,000. The "gentlemen at Patna" who sent this information to the Council did not make mention of any injury inflicted on the English factory there,² from which we may infer that it was let alone and when Shumshere Khan left Futwa after having appointed Ahmed Khan Curachea his Naib Governor, "they opened their houses and shops" and began business as if no interruption had happened.

"Umichand" writes Drake in Jany. 1757 "bought at a cheap rate Company's silk which was some years past plundered by the Marattas."

1. *Long's Selections*, Nos. 10 and 13.
2. *Long's Selections* No. 135.

The reason of this considerate treatment is not difficult to discover. The English had already come to be regarded with a feeling of respect by the people of the country because of their valour and virtues and the rebels and invaders probably entertained hopes of their co-operation in overthrowing the Mahomedan ruler of Bengal. This in the case of the Marhattas receives corroboration from the overtures they made to Clive in 1757 and 1766.

On the whole, the conduct of Aliverdi, as regards the English, was rather strict than unjust. It is true that now and then during his administration the supplies of a factory would be stopped and the native servants forbidden to serve till the offended *Foujdar* was propitiated. But the factors could always get redress from the Nabob if they sought it, as they did in the case of the Burdwan Rajah who had seized their *gomostas* and brought their trade to a stand still. The Company's servants, however, did not often like to appeal to the Nabob for they were not always in the right in these squabbles and they thought that a well-timed present obviated many difficulties and buried many unpleasant issues and they preferred to try experiments with a Persian cat or an Arab horse, a set of wax-work or a handsome amount in cash¹ rather than complain against men in power whose good-will was of utmost consequence to their success in trade and be made to answer inconvenient questions in tribunals which might lead to unpleasant discoveries about private trade and abuse of *dustucks*.²

1. *Long*. No. 15. Hugli *Foujdar*'s annual present amounted to Rs. 2,750.

2. Holwell accused Drake of issuing unlimited *dustucks*. Drake does not deny the charge but avers "I have refused

Aliverdi Khan, however, conferred upon the English one important privilege which had a far-reaching effect on their position in Bengal. During the wars with the Marhattas he allowed the Europeans to take steps for defending their factories. The English availed themselves of the permission to fortify their factory at Cossimbazar (1742-3),¹ strengthen the defences of Calcutta on an extensive scale and dig the great ditch which protected the northern half of Calcutta at the cost of the native merchants settled at Calcutta.¹

In spite of the considerate treatment accorded to the English by the Marhatta invaders and Afghan rebels, in spite of the favourable attitude of the Nabob, the troubles in Bengal and Bihar could not but affect English trade. "The trade of the Europeans" writes Holwell "became greatly embarrassed and injured." But it was due more to the general impoverishment of the country and the confusion brought on by the repeated invasions and incessant insurrections and rebellions than to "the oppressive exactions of the the usurper" and "plunder of the traders' effects by the enemy" as the good Doctor would have it. Enough has been said above to show that Holwell was wrong. It must be admitted,

applications on that head, further I was warm to remedy and put these checks which were resolved on to prevent the abuse of that indulgence."—*Drake's Letter* 17-25 Jany. 1757. *Hill. Vol. II* p. 148.

This abuse of dustucks armed with which the Company's servants and even their native favourites carried on private trade duty-free elicited a complaint even from Holwell who in 1753 reported that "the foreign trade of the settlement was become much too general." *Orme Mss.* Vol. IV, p. 4137.

1. *Hill* Vol. I xxvi.

however, that the *indirect* effects of the troubles were bad for the European trade. "A scarcity of grain in all parts (of the country), the wages of labour greatly enhanced, trade foreign and inland labouring under every disadvantage and oppression and though during the recess of the enemy (the Marhattas) from June to October (the rainy season when hostilities had to be suspended) the manufactures of this opulent country raised their drooping heads yet the duration of the reprieve from danger was so short that every piece of cloth at the *Aurungs* were hastily and consequently badly fabricated, though immensely raised in prices and from these causes came into disrepute at all the foreign markets."¹

1 Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events*, p. 151.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SECOND CLOSING OF THE PATNA FACTORY.

As we have stated before the history of the Patna Factory during the reign of Aliverdi Khan was meagre and obscure. Before the first closing of the Factory we have seen how the Chief lived in a hired house at Patna. After its re-establishment in 1718 they built a factory, godowns and Chief's apartments outside the city walls. They must have been of a temporary nature with thatched roofs, for the godowns had to be "recovered" in 1733; and in 1739 when a fire broke out the factory with its broad-cloth godowns and the Chief Mr. Cole's apartments were entirely consumed.¹ The factory built after this incident was of a more substantial nature and has been described by Orme as a "spacious building situated on the bank of the river just outside the western walls of the city"² in which Major Coote who came in pursuit of Law and Colonel Clive who came to fight the Shazadah were accommodated during their stay at Patna. This factory also was destroyed by fire in 1767. Besides the factory the English had another house "the country-house" as Golam Hossain calls it, at Singhiya, a garden at Bankeypore and a residency with large saltpetre godowns at Chuprah.³

Several men who rose to fame or notoriety afterwards were in the Patna Factory about this time.

1. *General to Court* Dec. 1739—Wilson's *Fort William* Vol. I 152.

2. *Orme's History* Vol. II, p. 191.

3. *Ive's Voyage* p. 170.

The first was Edward Stephenson who had been on the Surman Embassy. In 1718 he was a member of the Patna Council ; the next year he acted as the chief and in 1720 was confirmed in that office with a gratuity of £300 granted to him for his services when on the Embassy. He left Patna in 1728 to be the chief of Cossimbazar. He acted as the Governor of Calcutta for a day and a half in succession to Henry Frankland and re-enacted the story of the Roman consul whose power lasted till sunset.¹

The next was Captain Fenwick. He was "second" at Patna in 1730 but falling into difficulties lost his service. In 1739 he entered the army and after a life, neither very creditable nor lucky, he was permitted to return to England where in 1755 he wrote five "Letters from a gentleman who had resided 30 years in the English East India Company's service in the province of Bengal to his friend in London".

The third was Mr. Edward Forrestie, an Italian, whose services were requisitioned by the Bengal Council "to put Calcutta in a posture of defence against the Marhattas in 1742." He was made much of by the Council at Fort William but the Court did not approve of Forrestie's plans for the improvement of the defence of the city. "Mr. Forrestie may be an ingenious and skilful engineer but we don't see any occasion that we have for him ; such persons have generally expensive schemes in their heads ; therefore he must be discharged from our service", and he was discharged in 1744.²

The fourth was William Watts who played an important part in the revolution of 1757 as the Chief of

1. *J. A. S. B.* No. 2, 1898.—*Wilson's An Unrecorded Governor of Bengal.*

2. *General Letter from Court to Bengal*, March 21, 1744.

Cossimbazar. He was at Patna as "second" about 1749 where he was able to render some service to a Uzbek Tartar named Mirza Shah who became very much attached to him, accompanied him to Cossimbazar and helped him and his wife, the famous Begum Johnson, in the dark days of the English Settlement in Bengal in 1766.¹

The fifth was William Barwell who succeeded John Jackson as the President of Fort William but was dismissed within a few months in 1749, his old sins being raked up and urged against him. He was accused of violent behaviour to his chief at Patna, of refusing to set his seal to a contract with the merchants, Deenchand, Umichand and leaving Patna without permission.²

Patna like the other European settlements in Bengal suffered greatly from the general impoverishment of the country and the insecurity of life and property wrought by invasions and insurrections. The merchants and *shroffs* fled from the towns and labourers from the *Aurungs*.³ Even at Cossimbazar the English could not "get their bills on Patna, the *Shroffs* having absconded on account of the exactions of the the Nabob". No business could be done.

The political sky of Delhi was gloomy and threatening. The capital which had been the scene of terrible massacres, wholesale plunderings and frequent assassinations was now torn to pieces by the dissensions of the nobles. Mahomed Shah died in 1748 and was succeeded by

1. *Orme* Vol. II, p. 166.

2. *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. V, p. 173.—The Barwells had a long association with Patna. One of them Richard Barwell died fighting the Shazadah at Moshispore. Another was the Chief in 1771-2.

3. *Long's Selections* p. 5.

4. *Idem*.

Ahmed Shah who after a short and inglorious reign of 6 years was blinded and imprisoned by his *vizier*. A little before the death of Mahomed Shah, Ahmed Shah Abdali, the Afghan Chief, had invaded the Punjab. His appearance in India was a signal for the unruly Afghans in every part of India to take up arms. "Not a day passed" writes Golam Hossain, "but the inhabitants of Azimabad had their attention roused and their fears awakened five or six times a day by the sound of *Nagara* or kettle-drum: and on inquiry it was always found that this was occasioned by some Afghan Commander who was coming to the assistance of Shumshere Khan with so many men".¹ "Ali Mahomed Rohilla had quitted Sirhind where he commanded and cutting his way through Saharanpore had come to Bareilly where he had put everything in combustion."² What Shumshere Khan did in Bihar and Mahomed Khan in Bareilly was done by other Afghan leaders in other parts of the country. They counted upon the help of Ahmed Shah and were bent upon the dismemberment of the effete Moghul Empire, each appropriating to himself as much wealth and territory as he could secure by force or guile.

The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle which had brought the French war in Europe to a close had not restored good feelings between the English and French Settlements in India and hostilities had already begun on the Coromandel coast. If hostilities broke out in Bengal the French at Patna might prove a great source of danger to the unfortified English factory there.

1. *Seir*, vol. ii p. 40 Shumshere Khan was the Afghan Commander dismissed by Aliverdi Khan for his suspected complicity with the Marhatta invaders.

2. *Idem*.

Thus with their trade well-nigh crushed by the devastation of the country and impoverishment of the people, their lives and properties made generally insecure and with the fear of hostilities from the rival European colonies threatening them every moment, the Council at Fort William decided to give effect to the permission they had received from the Court in their General Letter dated June 17, 1748. "If you apprehend the least danger to our people at the subordinate factories you are to recall them and are not to issue any money by way of *Dadney* or send any goods into the Company's accounts, giving notice to the merchants till you renew the Company's trade" The exact date of the closing of the Patna Factory is not known but from what has been stated above it may be inferred that it was closed sometime after 1750. A consideration of the following facts may help us in fixing the date more approximately. Mr. Hill speaking of the year 1756 and referring to the Patna Factory says that it had *recently* been closed ; but Plaisted in his *Account of Countries, Cities and Towns adjacent to Bengal*, (2nd Ed. 1757) describing Patna, writes:—"The English had a sort of factory here but it had been withdrawn *several years*."² We know that Mr. Watts was the second at Patna in 1749. But in 1754 the factory had evidently been withdrawn for we find Coja Wazeed supplying saltpetre to the Company on contract and Umichand trying to bribe Drake to cancel the contract and give it him. He offered Drake 70,000 Rs, "if he would relinquish his endeavours to bring about the contract for salt-petre with Coja Wazeed". Watts probably came straight from Patna to take over charge

1. *Osme's History* Vol. III.

2. *Drake to Company* 17—25 Jany, 1757 *Hill's Records* Vol. II p. 149.

at Cossimbazar in succession to Fytche who had become the President at Fort William on the 5th July 1752. This would make the date of the withdrawal of the factory fall sometime between 1752 and 1754. At all events it was sufficiently recent in 1756, for Knox, the late Surgeon of the factory, who was in the Blackhole but escaped death, to be known as "Patna John Knox¹", and sufficiently recent early in 1757 to lead the Company to hope to recover their debts from their *Assamys* at Patna with the help of the officers of the Nabob.² The factory and godowns had not had time to fall into disrepair and dilapidation. They were ready for re-occupation when Mr. Pearkes came up to start business and could afford accomodation to Major Coote and his men when they arrived there almost immediately after.

1. *Hill. III* p. 72 note.

2. *Council letter to Watts. Feb. 16th, 1757.*

CHAPTER XXII

SIRAJUDDOULA AND THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY

With the death of Aliverdi Khan on the 10th April¹ 1756 the rule of the powerful and independent Nabobs of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa came to an end. The short reign of his grandson was but the last flaring up of the lamp before its final extinction.

The new Nabob was only 26 years old at the time of his accession to the throne.² His naturally headstrong temper confirmed by the undue indulgence shown him by his grandfather had deprived him almost completely of self-control. He began his reign with offending men who had been held in high esteem by Aliverdi Khan. Mir Jaffar, the paymaster, was deprived of his authority ; Raja Durlavram, Dewan, was superseded in his office, the rich banker Jagat Set was publicly treated with contumely. He coveted the wealth of his aunt, the wife of the Nabob of Dacca, whose Dewan, Hossein Kuli Khan was murdered in the streets of Murshidabad. He sent an expedition against his cousin Shaokat Jung, the son of his uncle Syed Ahmed, the Nabob of Purneah, Shaokat was defeated and killed : his wealth was plundered and his government was given to the son of Mohun Lal, a favourite of Siraj.

1. *Scrafton's Letter. Hill. II P. 54.* Holwell gives the date as the 9th April.

2. According to Stewart he was 20 years old at the time of his death ; Watts says he was nearly 25. Hill is correct. He was

26. See *V. A. Smith's Oxford History.*

He next quarrelled with the English. The causes of the quarrel may be briefly given as follows :—

1. Apprehending troubles, Durlavram had sent his son Krishnaballav with his family and his valuables to seek shelter with the English who, thinking it likely that the adopted son of the Begum of Dacca might supersede Sirajud-doulah, were nothing loth to oblige the favourite officer of the Begum. They prevaricated when Sirajud-doulah demanded Krishnaballav's surrender.

2. The English had begun fortifying the Cossimbazaar factory and extending and strengthening the defences of Calcutta under instructions from the Court as a preparation for the hostilities of the French which had already begun on the Coromandel Coast. They had not asked for or obtained the Nabob's permission.

3. The Nabob had heard exaggerated reports of the wealth of Calcutta and coveted it.

The capture of Calcutta and the massacre of the Blackhole followed by the recovery of the city by Clive and Watson and the conclusion of a treaty with the Nabob were events that occurred in breathless succession. These were succeeded equally quickly by the change of attitude of the two parties, negotiations of the English with the conspirators at Murshidabad, the battle of Plassey, Sirajuddoulah's overthrow, flight and death. The Nabob had taken Calcutta on 20th June, 1756. On the 3rd January, 1757, Admiral Watson formally handed over the keys of the City to Drake and his Council at Fort William. The treaty with the Nabob was concluded on the 9th Feb ; the agreement with Mir Jaffar was signed on the 19th May ; the battle of Plassey was fought on the 23rd June ; on the 3rd July Sirajuddoulah's dead body was being carried on an elephant through the streets of Murshidabad. It did not take even thirteen

months to transform the English settlers in Bengal from peaceful traders into king-makers.

Meanwhile the French town of Chandernagore had been captured and the French rivalry in Bengal completely crushed. The French chief at Cossimbazar, Law, was a fugitive in Bihar with a handful of men, when the battle of Plassey was fought and won.

Mir Jafar was placed on the throne of Murshidabad which, with a treasury drained dry, an unruly soldiery clamouring for their arrear pay, his fellow-conspirators dissatisfied with what they had gained as the price of their treachery and his English supporters treating him as their tool and always demanding money which he could with difficulty find, Mir Jaffar must have soon come to regret his new dignity as much as he had coveted it before.

These changes in the native government of Bengal were accompanied by equally serious changes in the administration of the Company's affairs in that province. President Dawson had been dismissed from the service in 1752 ; Fytche, who had succeeded him, died within a month of his accession to office. He was followed by Roger Drake who was the Governor when Calcutta was captured by Sirajuddoulah and renamed by him Alinagar in commemoration of his victory. On the approach of the Nabob at the head of his army, Roger Drake with his Council took refuge in the ship *Dodally* (*Daud Ali*) and dropped down the river to Fulta leaving the defence of the city to the Surgeon and Zemindar of Calcutta, J. S. Holwell, who was chosen by common consent, the commander of the garrison, Mr. Pearkes, the Ware-house-keeper, "waiving his seniority" in Holwell's favour. When Holwell and his companions were set free and joined the President at Fulta, the Council which

had since June met on board the ship, "finding it difficult to preserve the secrecy of their intentions", appointed a *Secret Committee* consisting of Roger Drake, Major Kilpatrick, William Watts and Holwell "for the better dispatch of the affairs of the country and for the receiving of intelligence and advice". This Secret Committee which was replaced by the *Select Committee* appointed by the Court in their dispatch dated the 11th Feb. 1756, "carried out all the revolutions that gave Bengal to the English and in later years developed into what is now known as the Foreign Department".¹

Drake continued to be the President for some time after the recapture of Calcutta hearing of which the Court in their dispatch of the 3rd August, 1757, appointed Clive as the President with a Select Committee of five, an order that was revoked by their subsequent dispatch of Nov. 11. 1757 which arrived at Calcutta on the 10th June 1758 in the *Hardwicke*. It nominated a council of 10 members, ruled that instead of one governor the three senior members should take the chair each successively for four months and appointed a Select Committee, consisting of five of the members, to transact the affairs with the country governments and to preserve secret such of their proceedings as they might judge expedient. This order of the Court was based upon the supposition that Clive had quitted Bengal as he had expressed a desire to do ; but when they came to learn in February, 1758, that Clive was yet in Bengal they appointed him, in their dispatch of the 8th March 1758, the sole President and Governor of Fort William and Chairman of the Select Committee, thus anticipating the decision of the Council at Calcutta who on the 26th

June, 1758, resolved to set at naught the Court's dispatch of 11th Novr, and requested Clive to take upon himself the office of the permanent President, an offer that Clive readily accepted. The resentment that Clive had expressed on receipt of the Court's dispatch of the 11th November which was shared by some members of the Council whom the Court afterwards dismissed from the service, was thus completely obliterated by this order of the Company which arrived at Calcutta in December 1758.¹

The Government of Calcutta thus now consisted of a President, a Council of ten and a Select Committee of five. It was this last that wielded the greatest power and was responsible for the subsequent revolutions in the country government.

1. *Auber* II p. 68.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BIHAR AFTER THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY.

The battle of Plassey shifted the centre of interest from Bengal to Bihar.

Raja Ramnarain had been made the Deputy Nabob of Patna after the death of Janakiram. He was confirmed as the Nabob on the accession of Sirajuddoulah. The authority of the governor of Bihar had ceased to be what it had been in the past. He was now only a deputy of the ruler of Bengal and his jurisdiction was curtailed by the conversion of the Foujdari of Purneah into a separate government independent of the government of Patna. Shaocut Jung even proceeded to the length of asserting that Purneah had been made by Aliverdi Khan independent of the Nabob of Murshidabad.

Ramanarain ruled his province wisely and well. The refractory zeminders of Bhojepore and Tikari were won over and from constant sources of trouble were converted into firm allies. Kamgar Khan of Narhut-Samay was keeping quiet. Bishen Singh of Sirish-Cotumba was forced to sue for peace and keep his son, Narain Singh, a boy of twelve, as a hostage at the Court of Patna for payment of the arrears he owed and for his future good conduct.¹

But Ramnarain was disliked and suspected by the new Subedar for his attachment to the family of Aliverdi Khan.

1. *From Holwell to Court*. Nov, 30, 1756. *Hill*. Vol. II. p. 2.

2. *Seir*. Vol. II. pp. 175—6.

Shortly before the battle of Plassey and immediately after the fall of Chandernagore there came into Bihar M. Law, the exiled French Chief of Cossimbazar, with an order from Sirajuddoulah on Ramnarain to help him with money. At Patna Law heard of the disastrous turn Siraj's affairs had taken and he marched back in all haste with the intention of helping the Nabob. But he was just too late; he arrived at Rajmahal only a few hours after Siraj had left it to meet his miserable fate. Learning that all was lost and knowing full well that he would be shown little mercy by the English if caught within the dominions of their puppet Nabob, Mir Jaffar, he marched hastily up country, followed close at his heels by Major Coote till he entered the territories of the Nabob of Oudh. Major Coote advanced up to Chuprah and thence returned to Murshidabad without daring to cross the border and offend a powerful potentate like the Nabob of Oudh.

No sooner had the English troops left Behar than a trouble broke out in Purneah. A man named Hazari Ali Khan assisted by Achal Singh,¹ the Dewan of the late Nabob, Shaocut Jung, formed a conspiracy against the son of Mohan Lal who had been made the Nabob of Purneah. The youngman was seized and imprisoned and Hazari Ali declared himself the Nabob. When Mir Jaffar heard of these disturbances he wanted to march out at once to suppress them but his troops would not budge till their arrears had been paid. With great difficulty Mir Jaffar succeeded in paying a part of the arrears and marched towards Patna after having sent word to Clive to follow him with his army. His aim was not only to

1. *Ougul Singh* of Orme. Other English writers call him *Oudel Singh*.

crush the rebellion in Purneah but also to dispossess Ramnarain of his government. At Rajmahal a disreputable favourite of his, Quadem Hossain Khan, who claimed kindred with him though on very slender and doubtful grounds, offered to undertake the suppression of the rebellion on condition that the *foujdari* should be bestowed upon him. Mir Jaffar readily agreed as it fell in with his design against Ramnarain. Quadem Hossain went to Purneah. Hazari Ali was expelled and Quadem Hossain became the *Foujdar*.¹

Clive had now come up with his army and accompanied by him Mir Jaffar marched up to Patna. Meanwhile Ramnarain had won the good graces of the English and Clive was favourably disposed towards him. An amicable settlement was made. Mir Jaffar's son, Miran, was to be the nominal Nabob of Patna and Ramnarain was to act as his Deputy, Ramnarain acknowledged Mir Jaffar as the Subedar and paid 7 lacs out of the arrears of rent. Clive and Mir Jaffar left for Murshidabad arriving there on the 15th May 1758.

Towards the close of the year another army appeared on the borders of Bihar. Mahomed Kuli Khan, Governor of Allahabad, and Suja-ud-doula, Nabob of Oudh, encouraged by the revolution effected in Bengal by the English and the unpopularity and presumed weakness of Mir Jaffar's government, entertained ambitious designs against Bihar. They were promised help by Raja Balawant Singh of Benares, Sunder Singh of Tikari and Palwan Singh of Bhojepore. They invited Ali Gohur, the heir-apparent to the throne of Delhi who had fled from the clutches of Gaziuddin, the Vizier and the real ruler of Delhi, and was living in exile in Rohilkhund, to come over and join them in their attempt to take

1. *Seir. Voi. II.*

• possession, on his behalf Bengal, Behar and Orissa. The prince agreed, procured a sanad from his father appointing him the *subedar* of the three provinces, collected a band of troops and appeared on the banks of the Karmanasa. Ramnaraian was in a fix, he consulted the English chief at Patna and was advised to temporise till the Bengal army arrived. The advice "jumped with his humor" and he acted upon it till he was forced to throw off the mask and the Imperial Army besieged Patna. But before any damage could be done to the city the siege was over. Mahomed Kuli Khan had heard that Sujaud-doulah taking advantage of his absence had obtained possession of the fortress of Allahabad. Collecting his forces he marched away at once though it was only to meet his death, leaving the prince absolutely without men and without money so that when Clive and Miran came up from Bengal they found the enemy melted away and the prince abjectly begging for money. Ramnaraian and Clive soon settled the affairs of the province. The disaffected Zemindars were forced to sue for peace and were pardoned. The prince was given a sum of money and he retired from Bihar. M. Law who was coming to join the prince went back to Bundelkhund where he had been living ever since his exile from Bengal.

Clive obtained from Mir Jaffar the Zemindary of Calcutta as his Jaigir, returned to Calcutta on June 1759 and left India in February following. His departure was a signal for new troubles to raise their heads in Bengal and Bihar.

Clive had left Miran at Patna where he stayed nearly a year. His insolent manners and cruel and tactless conduct gave offence to the powerful Zemindars of Bihar. A conspiracy was formed by Kamgar Khan, the Zemin-

dar of Narhut-Samay and Dilir Khan, a dismissed commander of Miran, for the overthrow of Mir Jaffar's government. They invited the Shahzada who had just heard of the death of his father, declared himself Emperor with the title of Shah Alum and appointed the Nabab of Oudh his Vizier, to invade Bihar. Ramnarain hearing of the advance of the Emperor marched out of the city, encamped outside with his army and a handful English soldiers under Lieutenant Cochrane and waited for the English troops under Caillaud and Miran who had left Murshidabad on the 13th January 1760 to come up and join him.

On the 30th the Bengal troops arrived at Sikrigully where some time was lost in negotiations with the Nabob of Purneah who had been threatened by Mir Jaffar with supercession for having allowed his rent to fall into arrears. He now took advantage of the danger with which Mir. Jaffar's rule was menaced and declared that he would join the prince if harsh measures were dealt out to him. Matters, however, were amicably arranged and the army marched to Patna.

Meanwhile a battle had been fought on the fields of Moshimpore¹ on the 9th February. Some of the Zemindars deserted Ramnarain and several of his soldiers went over to the enemy. The Nabob was wounded; Lieutenant Cochrane and Richard Barwell² were killed; the survivors, however, made, an orderly retreat to the factory under Surgeon Fullarton. The Patna army was completely routed but the Prince made no attempt to take the city.

On the 19th February news arrived that the Bengal army was within 14 miles of Patna. Shah Alum started

1. *Beveridge* says that it might be the village Moshimpore N. W. of Futwa.

2. This was the brother of William Barwell, the Governor.

the next day and fought a battle at Sheerpore on the 22nd. He was defeated but was allowed to retire to Bihar¹ whence after a few days he marched towards Midnapore. On his arrival at '*Mankara*' he heard of the Bengal Army under Miran coming in pursuit and also of another army under Mir Jaffar in Burdwan. He turned back to Patna and was joined by Law whom he had invited to come over from Bundelkhund. The city of Patna was invested and it seemed as if its doom was sealed. But the tables were completely turned by the arrival of a small flying party under Captain Knox who had covered the distance of 300 miles between Murshidabad and Patna in 13 days. The next day, the 13th April, the Emperor raised the seige, returned to Tikari and there waited for help from Ahmed Shah Abdali which never came.

Meanwhile Caillaud and Miran on their way to Patna met again the Nabab of Purneah at Rajmahal, this time with a large army and resolved to join the Emperor. They prepared to attack him. Quadem Hossain parted with his heavy baggage and retreated towards his own province closely pursued by the Bengal army. The rains had set in and the country had become difficult and dangerous. Yet Caillaud and Miran followed him, lured by the reports of the Nabab's rich treasure. On the night of 2nd July Miran's tent was struck by lightning

1. It was when the Prince was at Bihar that Conderoy or Khandi Roy, Bakshi to Kamgar Khan, was promised a lac of rupees by the famous paper of the three seals if he delivered the Shahzada into the hands of the Nabob alive or dead (15th April 1760). Hill's *Randfurlie* Knox J.B.O.R.S. vol. III Pt. 1 P. 144. The three seals were those of Calliand, Mirjaffar and Miran.

2. A village 6 miles south of Cossimbazaar.

and he and his attendants were killed. The pursuit had to be given up, Miran's dead body was placed on an elephant and Major Caillaud hurried back to Patna stopping only a day or two at Bettiah to realise from the Rajah the arrears of rent. At Patna he handed over his command to Captain Knox and returned to Calcutta on September, 10, 1760. On the 20th October he was superintending the *coup de etat* which put aside Mir Jaffar and placed Mir Casim on the Musnud of Murshidabad, a revolution "he had condemned in May."

Miran's dead body was brought to Patna and thence taken down to Rajmahal where it was buried. His tomb may yet be seen at Sharifabazar. Miran's death made it possible for the Company's servants to effect the revolution referred to above. Though cruel and profligate, the *Chota Nabob*, as he was called, seemed to have some abilities which made him the sole prop of his feeble, old father. His death made Mir Jaffar absolutely helpless.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE RE-OPENING OF THE FACTORY AT PATNA.

Like the date of the closing of the factory the exact date of its re-opening is unknown. It must have happened immediately after "the further terms" of the treaty of the 9th February 1757 had been proposed and explained to Sirajuddoulah by Mr. Watts, the English representative at Murshidabad. The suggestion of the reopening of the Patna Factory forms the 9th item of the instructions conveyed to Watts by the Council Letters dated the 16th February; "As it is probable the Honorable Company may judge it proper to order the re-establishing of the Factory at Patna, we desire you will apply for liberty to repossess it whenever we think proper without any expense of presents of money to the Durbar and that the Nabob's officers at Patna be ordered to assist the Company's agents in recovering their debts from the *assamys* of that place."

M. Law who was at Patna from 3rd to 22nd June does not allude to the presence of any Englishman there. But on his return from Rajmahal when he passed by the city on the 14th or 15th of the next month Mr. Pearkes, the English Factor had come to Patna, for in a letter dated the 16th July he informed Major Coote, who had come in pursuit of Law and was then at Rajmahal, of the retreat of the Frenchman.¹ It must have been therefore towards the close of June or early in July that the

1. *Law's Voyage* p. 162.

Patna factory was re-opened.¹ It was Mr. Pearkes who re-opened the factory and was appointed its Chief.

Mr. Richard Paul Pearkes had been the Import Warehouse Keeper before the capture of Calcutta. During the seige he had waived his seniority in favour of Holwell who thus was chosen leader of the garrison. When the city was taken he fled to the Dutch who surrendered him to the Nabob's men from whose custody he managed to escape and join the Governor at Fulta.

Mr. Pearkes received Major Coote on 26th July with great cordiality and accommodated him and his men "in the factory and godowns."² After a short stay the Major started on the pursuit of M. Law again and reached Chuprah on the 2nd August only to learn that Law had left Chuprah 17 days before and was then at Benares. At Chuprah he found accomodation for himself and his troops "in the large saltpeter godowns or storehouses and the factory house."³

Major Coote had been at Chuprah a little above a week when on the 11th August, 'Denaut Khan who was an agent or "gomostha" of an Armenian black merchant, an agent of the Governor and Council at Calcutta, who had been supplying the Company with saltpetre on contract ever since the dissolution of the Patna Factory," complained to the Major that the Dutch "second" was about to take out of the godowns by force the Saltpetre he had prepared for the English. Upon this Major Coote immediately sent and prevented it." With a view to guard

1. Arch-Deacon Firminger says it was in July. See his *Three Surgeons of Patna* p. 3.

2. *Ive's Voyage* p. 163.

3. *Idem and Orme's Indosthan* Vol. II p. 181.

against similar occurrences in future he issued a proclamation "to all whom it may concern" in the following terms ;

"Whereas the saltpetre belonging to Coja Ashroff is collected and provided for the English Company, let no person touch it or interrupt him in expediting the said saltpetre. Moreover if any persons have seized or carried off any of it without his consent, let it be immediately returned to him by those who have it in their possession, as they will answer the contrary."¹

Cojah Wazeed was a great Armenian merchant of of Hugli who had recently been of very great assistance to the English in their negotiations with Sirajuddoulah and Mir Jaffar. For his extensive trade operations he was known among the country merchants as *Fakr-ut-tujar*, the chief of merchants². He had the monopoly of saltpetre trade in Bihar and the English had placed with him their contract which Omichaud vainly tried to secure for himself. Cojah Ashroff was a relative of Wajeed and

1. *Le's Voyage* p. 170.

2. Some account of Wazeed's wealth is given by Mustapha the translator of *Seir*. See *Vol. II p. 400 note*.

"He had 15 elephants and 50 horses of value in his stable with 120 women in his seraglio, 15 Chopdars or macebearers and 200 other servants ; he was master of 5 ships and of about 2000 boats. What his fortune may have been is not known but he lived at the rate of a thousand rupees a day".

Cojah Wazeed's wealth and influence however could not save him from a miserable end. He was taken prisoner, suspected of complicity with the supposed plot of Mir Jaffar to invite the Dutch into Bengal from Batavia. By the order of Clive he was brought from Hugli under a strong guard to Calcutta and died there in confinement in October or November, 1758. *Holwell's Tracts* p. 171.

his manager in Bihar. Major Coote wanted to do a good turn to Wazeed or more properly to the Company.

This incident had an important result. It attracted the attention of the Major to the saltpetre trade of the Company ; and as he had to remain in Bihar for nearly a month awaiting orders from Colonel Clive, he thought he could profitably employ the time in studying it. Trade and money-making were the chief end an Englishman in India had in view in those days, be his profession what it might. Major Coote discussed the matter with his secretary and hit upon a plan of making it highly lucrative. He communicated it to the government at Calcutta who approved of it and forthwith directed, in their letter dated November 3, 1757, Scrafton who was then with Nabob Mir Jaffar at Murshidabad¹ "to use his utmost endeavours to prevent Cojah Wazeed's obtaining any exclusive *parwanah* for the purchase of potre (?) at Patna".²

On the 28th August Major Coote received a letter from Pearkes complaining of the ill-usage he and his people had met at the hands of Cojah Ashroff's peons and requesting him to send a party of soldiers to his assistance "as he was really in danger of losing his life". The Major immediately wrote to Ashroff, ordering him to wait upon Mr. Pearkes and "deliver up to him those people who had used him ill, otherwise he would go

1. "Clive had left Murshidabad on 14th Sept. leaving Watts, Maningham and Scrafton to transact the Company's affairs with the Nabob and his ministers". *Orme Vol. II p. 196.*

The Nabob was about this time making preparations for his expedition against Purneah. He arrived at Rajmahal on the 7th Novr.

2. *Long's Selections p. 105.* *Potre* is evidently a mistake for *Petre*.

himself and find them out". He informed Mr. Pearkes also that if there was a necessity he would march immediately to his assistance¹. The affair seems to have been amicably settled as we do not hear of Major Coote's coming down to Patna.

Major Coote left Chuprah on the 7th Sept. 1757. About three months after his departure another outrage was committed by Cojah Ashroff's people on "Mr. Pearkes as he was going to weigh 10,000 Mds. of the contract potre"². The insolence of the Cojah led to high words and words to blows and two of the factory servants were killed in the affray³. Hearing of the incident the governor and Council at Fort William wrote to Clive who was then at Patna with the Nabob "to demand satisfaction without which it would be impossible for the Company's servants to do their duty with security". Clive understood the situation; he felt that such incidents would recur if the English attempted to trade in a commodity the monopoly of which was enjoyed by another. He accordingly asked the Nabob to grant the *farm* of saltpetre to the English company"⁴. He offered the highest terms at which the *farm* had ever been rated. The Nabob after some objections at last gave his consent (Feb. 1758) on condition that the Company paid him Rs. 40,000/- for the farm and made over to him yearly 20,000 Mds. of saltpetre for his own use⁵. This reservation, as we shall see, led to troubles after

1. *Ive's Voyage* p 174.

2. *Long*. Jany. 16, 1758.

3. *Orme* Vol. II p. 282.

4. *Idem*.

5. *Scranton's letters* p. 113.

wards. It won for Mcguire¹, quite unreasonably, a bad name and formed one of the causes of quarrel between Ellis and Mir Casim.

"The Dutch East India Company protested against the grant which Clive answered by producing a letter in which they had asked the farm of Siraj-ud-doulah for themselves. However, it was agreed to supply them with the quantity they used to purchase".²

The privileges thus secured put the Company's trade in seltpetre on an altogether new footing. Latterly saltpetre had been purchased from merchants on contract the terms of which left hardly any margin of profit to the Company. Omichand had been allowed to enjoy such contracts ever after he had been tricked out of the exorbitant price he had demanded for his services to Mir Jaffar and the Company in bringing about the fall of Siraj. About a month after the Red Treaty forged by Lushington at the instance of Clive by which "he was to have nothing" had been shown to him, Clive "requested the Committee their support to enable Omichand to perform his contract for the supply of saltpetre".³ He had been allowed to contract for 58,000 Mds. for 6 Arcot rupees. This was taken exception to by the Company as Mr. Pearkes had contracted at Patna for 51,000 Mds. at 2-14 sicca rupees per factory maund⁴.

1. *Seir* Vol. II p. 442.

"Mcguire was acquired some bad renown by selling (?) to Mir Casim a quantity of salt (petre) a transaction nothing blameable in itself but which however made a strange noise in the world".

2. *Orme* Vol. II p. 196.

3. *Malcoln's Life of Clive* Vol. I p. 300 n.

4. Letter from Court March 33, 1750—in *Long's Selections*.

The grant of this farm and the order of the Council for the Dustuck peons to wear badges which showed them to be the Company's servants, prevented trouble at the Chowkeys and *ghats*. The business of the newly established factory progressed smoothly for a short while but the political disturbances referred to in the last chapter soon overtook and threw it out of joint. From after the Battle of Plassey for nine years Bihar was the battle-ground on which ambition and intrigue fought out their fights. Armies marched up and down the country, plundering the people and besieging and storming cities; dark conspiracies, cruel assassinations, inhuman massacres became so common that "they were made not marked".

The revolution in Bengal that had led to the re-establishment of the factory of Patna and the political disturbances that followed had transformed the trade settlement into a political residency. The Chief at Patna was no longer a mere trader; he was the Resident at the Court of Patna whose advice the Government of the country often sought and acted upon. When Shah Alum invaded Bihar. Raja Ramnarain consulted Mr. Amyatt of Patna as to what he should do, and he followed his advice; when Mir Casim threatened Raja Ramnarain he threw himself on the protection of Carnac and not

Macaulay's story of Omichand's death of a broken heart was a myth. He lived several years after this incident and left a will at his death by which he bequeathed a legacy of Rs. 1500 each to the Foundling Hospital and the Magdalen.

Long No. 908.

His name seems to have been *Aminchand*. See Mr. Justice S. C. Mittra in the *Sahitya Sanhita* which gives Umichand's will which Mr. Justice Mittra discovered in the Records Office of the Calcutta High Court.

Macguire which sealed his fate. The influence of the Chief, however, was greatly impaired by the presence of the English army in the country under a commander who was in no way under the control of the Chief. There were frequent differences of opinion between the civil and military authorities which led to bitter and unseemly quarrels and palpable injuries to the Company's interests. The evil was remedied by the withdrawal of the high military commanders from Bihar and the placing of a small contingent of troops under a subordinate officer at the disposal of the Chief. This arrangement though it remedied one evil, produced another. It had the effect of making the Chief so powerful that now and then he even defied the authority of the Governor and Council at Fort William.

When the restoration of the Patna Factory was reported to the Court they suggested the idea of establishing a "Residency" at Agra. The Council however could not approve of the suggestion. "The distance is so great" they observed in reply,¹ "the northern provinces of the empire so liable to troubles and the great cities so frequently plundered by Afghans, Moghuls and others that we think it would be exposing the Company's estate to a risk more than the profits would be adequate to, especially if your Honors approve of keeping a factory at Patna where broadcloth and copper may and will be purchased by the Delhi and Agra merchants if those cities enjoy peace and tranquility." The idea of a Residency at Agra was abandoned. Subsequently on a similar ground Clive closed the newly established Benares factory.²

1. *Council Letter of Feb. 27, 1758.*

2. *Long's Selections* pp. 118—9

Mr. Pearkes made but a short stay at Patna. He was appointed by the Court in their letter dated March 3, 1758 accountant at Fort William "with a gratuity annexed to that post of current rupees 1000/- per annum" as they thought that "the conduct of Mr. Pearkes during the time of the attack on Fort William and the hardships he under-went in continuing to discharge his duties in defence thereof until the Nabob became the master of the place, entitled him to some particular mark of their regard". Peter Amyatt, the Chief of Judgdea, succeeded him and was at Patna before Mir Jaffar and Clive had left the city. Clive returned to Murshidabad on the 15th May.

Amyatt seems to have been of a peaceful and amiable disposition without any great strength of character or ability which made him, as Vansittart thought, an easy tool in the hands of designing men and which caused him to be superseded first by Holwell and then by Vansittart.

Amyatt had only been a few months in Bihar when towards the close of the year the Shahzada made his appearance on its borders. Raja Ramnarain applied to the Chief of Patna, whom he regarded as the representative of the British power in the province, for advice. The advice he gave was characteristic of the man. He told the Rajah that the English would remain at Patna if assistance should arrive ; if not, they would abandon the factory and retreat to Bengal.¹ As for Ramnarain he had better humor the enemy till succour came ; if all hopes of assistance failed he should provide himself as events might direct. The Raja, as we have seen, acted

upon his advice and Mr. Amyatt when he could get no news "of any one having moved in Bengal embarked on board a number of boats and budgerows he had kept ready, descended 20 or 30 *coses* down the river, taking with him a number of English gentlemen he had with him." In the factory were left a number of Telingas and Surgeon Fullarton and Mr. Richard Barwell to fight in Lieutenant Cochrane's tiny band of soldiers. He met Clive advancing to Patna at the head of the Bengal army and returned with him to his factory.'

Early next year the Shazada who had assumed the imperial title of Shah Alum on hearing of the murder of his father Alumgir II by Gaziuddin on Nov. '30, 1759, appeared before Patna again. Ramnarain went out and fought him at Moshimpore. Cochrane and Barwell were slain, the remnants of the troops under Cochrane were brought back to the factory by the bellicose surgeon Fullarton. Mr. Amyatt was not in the fight and probably had not left the factory. When a few days later Captain Knox and Shitab Roy made a heroic onslaught on the retreating army of Quadem Hossain Khan opposite Patna on the other side of the river Mr. Amyatt contented himself with watching the fight from the wharf through his glass. Evidently Mr. Amyatt had no stomach for fighting. Meanwhile Clive had left for England nominating Vansittart as his successor. As Vansittart did not arrive at Calcutta till July 1760 Holwell was appointed to act as the Governor during the intervening period of five months. In both these arrangements the seniority of Amyatt was passed over. "As soon as he heard of Howell's appointment he strongly objected to it by

letter, and then delivering his office to his "second" went to Calcutta".¹ Mr. Hay was the acting Chief at Patna till Mr. Macquire² entered upon his duties in Jany. 1761.

1. *Seir* Vol. II p. 374. "On the 3rd (Decem) Amyatt was recalled to Calcutta". *Major Randfurlic Knox* by S. C. Hill. *B. O. R. Journal* Vol. III p. pp. 1.

2. Macquire had been the resident at Balumghury in 1753 (*Long p. 42*). On his return to Calcutta in 1754 he had been accused of a murderous assault on the Engineer Plaisted who had been exposing the malpractices of the Military Master's Office, and had been threatened with suspension. Macquire went to England on leave in Nov. 1756 (*Wilson's Fort William* Vol. II pp. 37 and 115) but was permitted to return in March 1757. He was a member of the Select Committee in 1760. He was appointed Chief at Patna probably in September. We find the Council granting him on 3rd Nov. Rs. 800/- "for his way carriage to Patna". (*Long p. 248*). He seems however not to have started for Patna at once. He was met on his way by Golam Hossain sent by Major Carnac to Murshidabad to fetch Mir Casim and Major Carnac took over charge on the 1st Jany. 1761. He was dismissed by the Court dispatch dated 21st Jany 1761 but was restored to service in July 1762 (*Vansittart's Narrative* Vol. II p. 71).

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SECOND REVOLUTION IN BENGAL.

Mr. Holwell during his short tenure of office laboured hard to persuade his colleagues in the Council that a second revolution in the country government of Bengal was necessary. The noise he had made and the prominence he had secured by his letters on the capture of Calcutta and the Black Hole Massacre did not last very long nor did they bring him much material advantage. The Court in their "General" of the 11th November 1758 had relegated him to the 9th place in the Council. Clive had no very high opinion of his character and veracity and made no secret of his views. Holwell felt that he must resign the Company's service and return home. But before he did so he must make a bold bid for fortune. When Siraj was deposed he had received only one lac. Now that he was the Chief, if he could contrive a revolution he might secure the lion's share and retire home a rich man for life. Circumstances favoured his design. Mir Jaffar's affairs were in a muddle. His position from the first had not been either safe or pleasant. An exhausted treasury, an impoverished country, vast liabilities to discharge which he had to resort to the severest exactions, are not things calculated to make any ruler happy or popular. The odium he had incurred by the manner of his accession was intensified, if possible, by his subsequent conduct and his heavy impositions which drove many a Zemindar into open revolt and many a poor ryot into ruin and despair. He

was treated with scant courtesy by the English merchants, a fact that did not add to his dignity in the eyes of his people. The death of Miran brought matters to a crisis. Mir Jaffar was in feeble health, worn out with his debauchery and crushed by his load of worries and his recent bereavement. His other sons were all very young, so that whom should he regard as the prop of his old age but his worthy son-in-law? And the Company's servants were anxious to help him to this prop who should not only fill their private pockets but ease a little the distressed condition of the Company whose affairs were about this time in as miserable a plight as those of Mir Jaffar himself. All trade had come to a stand-still; in its place there were the expensive wars in the north and the south. The treasury of Murshidabad had enabled the government at Fort William to render some help to the Governor of Madras but for which the French war would have been brought to an abrupt and disastrous close. The President at Calcutta was now in a miserable plight himself and was no longer in a position to assist the sister government. "The sum of a lac of rupees a month, which the Nabob used to pay while the Company's troops were employed on his requisition was scarcely sufficient to meet their actual field expenses for the time, while that of maintaining the troops when not on service and supplying them with recruits and stores from Europe was totally unprovided.¹ The annual revenue of Rs. 30000 from the ceded lands², even if entirely

1. "The bare pay, according to Holwell, amounted to Rs. 50,000/- with stores etc. to 70 or Rs. 90,000/-".

2. "Territory surrounding Calcutta to the distance of 600 yards beyond the Marhatta Ditch and all the land lying to the

devoted to this object might have been barely sufficient to meet the deficit. But the Nabob had not been able to pay the monthly subsidy for two or three months; assignments for it had been given on particular districts¹, but the depredations of the Marhattas and the ravages of Shah Alum had made them unproductive. The army at Patna was clamouring for payment. The Company had borrowed money; their funds were not sufficient to meet the bills when they became due²."

Immediately after Miran's death Mir Jaffar's disaffected soldiery clamoured for their arrear pay and besieged the palace. Mir Casim advanced 3 lacs of rupees and became security for the payment of the rest within a specified time on condition that he should be declared next in succession to the Nabobship. The condition was accepted but Mir Casim could not wait till the death of the old man and is said to have proposed to Holwell that he should make away with him and seize the throne at once, at which the virtuous Mr. Holwell expressed "much astonishment and abhorrence,"³

south of Calcutta as far as Culpee, granted to the Company on Zamindary tenure by the 10th clause of the Treaty with Mir Jaffar"—*Hill* Vol. II p. 373.

Orme gives the revenue as Rs. 2,22,958 (Vol. II p. 276) which corresponds nearly to the figures given by Thornton *i.e.* Rs. 2,30,000.

1. This refers to the *tuncaws* or orders payable as the revenues should be realised by the Foujdars of Hugli and Krishnanagar. These districts had been "devastated by the Marhattas" but did not suffer from the ravages of Shah Alum.

2. Elphinstone's "*Rise of the British Power in the East*" p. 352.

3. "With an inconsistency characteristic of the men of his type he writes a few pages later on that he knew nothing of any such design."—Thornton's *History* I p. 406 n.

but did not hesitate to intrigue to make such a man the new Nabob.¹

The scheme was ready when Vansittart arrived at Calcutta on the 27th July. Holwell had drawn up a lengthy memorandum setting out the series of misdeeds with which he saddled Mir Jaffer and his son.² The members of the Committee had been talked over. Major Caillaud hurried to Calcutta from Patna to take part in a revolution "in September which he had disapproved in May."³ Vansittart accepted the scheme. Mir Casim was asked to visit Calcutta on the arrival of the Governor; he had a private meeting with Mr. Holwell arranged by Cojah Petruse and the terms were settled of the treaty signed on the 27th September 1760.⁴ On the 14th October the Governor went to Mursidabad, Mr. Holwell having refused to head the deputation, and on the 14th October the revolution was a *fait accompli*. Mir Casim was seated on the throne of Mursidabad and poor old Mir Jaffar was on his way to Calcutta with his

1. "Holwell had entertained a project of revolution from his first accession to Government"—Scrafton's *Observations on Vansittart's Government*.

2. "In justice to the memory of the late Nabob, Mir Jaffar, we think it incumbent upon us to acquaint you that the horrible massacres wherewith he is charged by Mr. Holwell in his *Address to the Proprietors of East India Stock* (page 46) are cruel aspersions on the character of that prince which have not the least foundation in truth. The several persons there affirmed and who generally have been thought to have been murdered by his order are all now living except two who were put to death without the Nabob's consent or knowledge"—*Supplement to the Select Committee's Letter to Court, September 30, 1765*.

3. Malcolm's *Clive Vol. I p. 249*.

4. Mill gives the date as 17th.

favourite consort and his valuables. He was temporarily accommodated in the two houses belonging to Sobharam Bysack and Lalbehari Sett.¹ Afterwards he built a house and lived there till the third revolution restored him to Murshidabad.

Presents were distributed. Holwell had 27 lacs and he resigned the Company's service "on account of many unjust and unmerited marks of resentment he had received from his employers."² It was fortunate he did so, for only a few months later arrived the Court's order dismissing him (21st January 1761).

The Governor was able to send 2½ lacs to Madras whence a letter had been received a few days before this urgently demanding money "without which the siege of Pondichery would have to be raised."

Mir Casim feeling convinced that it was only with the help of money he could stand, forthwith proceeded to raise it regardless of the nature of the means he employed for the purpose. Every body was made to pay. "The relations and dependants of former princes as well as those who had acquired wealth by ministering to their pleasure were all severely pressed. The Zemindars who had left their rent in arrears were plundered, superseded or imprisoned; the trade dues were rigorously realised; the state officers were called upon to render accounts and those who failed to do so or were found guilty of defalcation, were made to disgorge the public money with interest and sometimes their private estates were plundered and confiscated by way of penalty." "In short," says Golam Hossain, "Mir Casim had attentively listened to and now strictly followed the

1. Hollwell's *Tracts* p. 24.

2. *Idem* p. 178.

precept of *Zaidie*, "Why collectest thou not from every subject a grain of silver that thou mayst form a treasure?"

Within a short time Mir Casim was able to pay off the arrears of pay of the English troops at Patna and of his own soldiers at Murshidabad and meet his engagements with the Company. The refractory zemindars were brought under control and order was restored in the distracted country. He overhauled the whole rickety system of administration of his predecessors and re-organised the army on the European model with the help of two men who long enjoyed his favour. They were Cojah Gregory, the brother of Cojah Petrusse, known among the Musalmans by the name of Gurgin Khan and *Sumroo*¹ whose real name was Walter or Balthazaar Reinhardt, an Alsatian mercenary who for his gloomy looks was called by the English *sombre* which the natives changed into *Sumroo*.

Meanwhile troubles were brewing in the Council at Fort William. The way in which Vansittart had been put over the heads of the Senior Members of the Council excited great resentment and led to the formation of a strong party against that of the Governor, which after the dismissal of Sumner, Playdell and Macguire in January, 1761, consisted of the Governor himself and Mr. Warren Hastings. The opposition set themselves to harass the Governor and as it was usual in those days they were not very scrupulous as to the means they employed for the purpose.

1. There is a great deal of obscurity attached to his name and nationality. Capt. Broome calls him an Alsatian, Sleeman, a German and Beveridge hints at his having been a Frenchman. Sumroo died in 1778. His wife Begum Samru was a romantic figure in history. She died in 1836.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BIHAR UNDER MIR CASIM.

The Emperor had not yet left Bihar but was hovering on her borders. His camp had become the rallying point of the disaffected zemindars. Major Carnac who took up the command at Patna on the 1st of January, 1761, marched against the Emperor and forced him to an engagement at Gaya-Mānpur on the 15th. The Emperor's army suffered a complete defeat and fled leaving M. Law on the battlefield "riding a cannon." He was taken prisoner but was treated with all possible respect and was sent to Calcutta whence he left for France in 1762.¹ The Council had made up their minds to conclude peace with the Emperor and the Emperor was eager to do it. The Nabob who had now come up, met the Emperor at the English factory, paid Rs. 50,000, "besides what he had already paid." out of the arrears of revenue, and promised to pay the yearly revenue of 24 lacs. In return he was formally acknowledged as the Subedar of Bengal, Behar and Orissa and was invested with a sonorous title.² After a short stay at Patna the Emperor marched towards Delhi to take possession of his father's throne.

Mir Casim was now at leisure to regulate the affairs of Bihar. The first person to whom he directed his attention was Raja Ramnarain. He wanted to squeeze out of his Deputy the wealth he had accumulated. Ramnarain had won the good graces of the English but

1. On his return to France he was made a Chevalier, Colonel Commissary to the King and afterwards Commandant in the East Indies and Governor of Pondichery"—Buckland's Dictionary.

2. Mir Shamsuddin Khan Bahadur Nasir Jung.—*Seir* Vol. II, p. 381.

the English at Patna were at variance among themselves. Macguire, the chief at Patna sided with Vansittart and the Nabob ; Carnac and Hay opposed the Governor and supported Ramnarain. Ramnarain was called upon to render accounts of his office from the day he had stepped into it. This was neither easy nor convenient ; Ramnarain prevaricated and procrastinated till he could not put off Mir Casim any longer. The imperfect accounts he submitted were closely scrutinized ; they were found amiss, and Ramnarain with his family were imprisoned first at Patna and then at Murshidabad. Raja Rajballav, the Dewan, was appointed Nabob but he held office only for a few months. Having incurred the Subedar's displeasure he was deposed and his property at Dacca was confiscated. He was succeeded by Raja Nobat Roy who too was removed from office after a short time as unfit to cope with a man with a headstrong temper like Ellis, the successor of Macguire at Patna, and Mir Mehdi Khan was made the Nabob.

Of the Zemindars of Bihar, Camgar Khan had to retire with his troops into the mountains of Ramghur ; Bishen Singh of Siris-Cotumba fled to Benares ; Pahlawan Singh and other Zemindars of Bhojepore took refuge at Gazipur and in the territories of the Nabob of Oudh : Buniad Sing and Fateh Singh made their submission and were put in confinement. Order was restored in Bihar and its revenue improved but there were fear and sense of insecurity everywhere. Mir Casim had grown suspicious of everybody and every action. Free social intercourse came to an end. There was no relying upon the Nabob's favour and whoever offended him had the cruellest punishment dealt out to him. He would raise a man to the highest office of the state one day but the next day he would pull him down on the slightest suspicion of his infidelity and subject him to a painful

death. Chintamon Roy had been made the superintendent of finance in Bhojepore. He was suspected of carrying on correspondence with the exiled Zemindars and Mir Casim ordered him to be made fast to an elephant's foot and carried round in this state until death ensued. His nature seems to have been always cruel and suspicious. His recent quarrels with the Company's servants made him still more so.

Mir Casim, as we have seen, had remodelled his army. He wanted to test its strength and so led an expedition into Bettiah to chastise the Zemindar of that country who had proved unruly. His fortress was taken and the Raja subjugated. The victorious Nabob now determined to attack Nepal. Gurghin Khan gained a victory over the enemy troops but one night the general's camp was attacked by the Gurkhas who, though they were repulsed, inflicted such heavy losses that the Nabob resolved to recall the General and return to Patna. Gurghin Khan joined him at Bettiah and the Nabob returned with him to Patna to find that his quarrel with the English had reached a crisis.

As has been stated above Mir Casim was by nature jealous and suspicious. He did not trust his English friends. They might pull him down in the same way as they had done his father-in-law and perhaps they were already thinking of another paying revolution. The treatment he met with from the Opposition Members of the Council confirmed his suspicion. He was unacceptable to them not because they objected to him personally but because he was the Governor's man. Mr. Amyatt admitted as much to the author of *Seir Mutaquerhin*.¹

Mir Casim had resolved from the very beginning to stand independent of the English. He had paid off the

1. *Seir*, Vol. II p. 416.

the arrears of the army, made satisfactory arrangements for the payment of the sums he had promised by the treaty, replenished the empty treasury, subjugated the refractory Zemindars, weeded out the unreliable officers, reformed his army and restored order to the distracted country. This self-reliance of the new Nabob was perhaps not very agreeable to the Company's servants who had been accustomed to deal with the helpless puppet, Mir Jaffar. The imperious attitude they took up offended the sense of dignity of the Mahomedan ruler and he resented it. With a view to avoid intercourse as much as possible with the Company's servants who never allowed him to forget that he owed everything to them he removed his capital from Murshidabad to Monghyr. But unfortunately events happened which threw him and the English together more frequently in Bihar than he had expected. With their feelings in a state of tension they could not come together without falling out.

The first cause of difference was Raja Ramnarain whom Mir Casim wanted to oust from his office. Major Carnac who was then in Bihar at the head of the English troops supported the Raja as one for whom Colonel Clive "had a peculiar regard". The Nabob found another ally in Macguire, the chief at Patna. Macguire had been present at the signing of the treaty with Mir Casim on the 27th September, 1760 and was one of its signatories. The revolution had brought him a present of 35 lacs. He was a friend of the Governor and a member of the Select Committee. He could not but stand by his own nominee and the Nabob "took care to keep this new friend steady in his interest by a variety of favours and presents he knew how to place".¹

1. *Seir*, Vol. II p. 415

Mir Casim complained to the Governor of the slights Major Carnac had put upon him when they had met at Bycantporee early in 1761. Carnac was called upon to explain his conduct and he left Patna in May. Colonel Coote succeeded him, but the change did the Nabob no good. Coote took up an equally imperious attitude and played the master declaring to Mir Cassim that he must comply with everything that he recommended.¹ Mir Casim strongly resented this demeanour of the British Officer as he did the posting of low caste sepoys at the gate of the Fort whose presence his Jemadars and Rissaladars took exception to and also the outrageous conduct of the Colonel himself in rushing into his camp one midnight and demanding to see him at once led away by a false rumour, probably spread by Ramnarain, that the Nabob was about to attack the city.² Macguire commenting on the incident wrote to Vansittart that it was the result of giving such ample powers to the commander-in-chief and recommended that both Colonel Coote and Major Carnac who had returned to Patna to escort the Emperor to Delhi should be ordered down to Calcutta. They were recalled and only two companies of infantry and four battallions of sepoys were left at Patna under Captain Carstairs who was directed to place himself entirely under the orders of the Chief at Patna.

Mir Casim won the contest ; but he was destined not to have his own way long. Ramnarain was brought to him on the 19th Aug. 1761³ by Mr. Hay under a guard of protection and though the Rajah was able to compromise matters for the time being by paying the Nabob 50 lacs

1. Mir Casim's letter to the Governor, 16th June 1761.

2. Idem dated 17th June. The incident happened the night before.

3. Malcolm's *Life of Clive* Vol. II p. 30 n.

he could not avert his miserable doom. The very day Ramnarain was delivered over to the Nabob, Macguire was dismissed from his office as the chief of the factory for having signed along with Clive, Holwell, Playdell and Sumner an insubordinate letter to the Court in reply to theirs which they stigmatised "as unworthy yourselves and us, in whatever relation considered, either as master to servants or gentlemen to gentlemen", Macguire had been asked by the Council to continue chief for two months longer till his successor could join his post.¹ But this had been negatived by the Board. So he handed over charge to his "second," Mr. Hay and left Patna. His successor was John or William Ellis, "a man of ungovernable temper and the most intemperate and arbitrary of all the opponents of the Governor".² The cause of his resentment against the Governor, according to Vansittart, was because Macguire had been appointed chief of Patna two months before his return from England, an arrangement, he thought, made deliberately with the intention of superseding his claims and putting a slight upon him. He had however concealed his feeling well, acted as the President during the absence of Vansittart at Murshidabad and tacitly supported the revolution³. With his advent at Patna with Henry Lushington as his second the smouldering ill-feelings between the Nabob and the Company's servants blazed out again. The dismissal of Macguire, Playdell and Sumner deprived the Governor of his majority in the Council

1. Holwell's *Tracts* p. 141.

2. Thornton's *History* Vol. I. p. 422.

3. Vansittart's *Narrative* Vol. I. p. 160

4. Holwell's *Tracts* p. 141.

and at Patna "it was not long before Ellis¹ entered upon a course of action equally disagreeable to the Nabob and the English Governor".

1. His Christian name was John and not William according to the inscription on Lushington's tomb in the Eastbourne Parish Church given in H. E. A. Cotton's letter dated 1st August 1907. He has been named Wiliam Ellis in *Bengal Past and Present Vol. III 1909 p. 394.*

CHAPTER XXVII.

MR. ELLIS AT PATNA. HIS QUARRELS WITH MIR CASIM.

Immediately after his arrival Ellis began deliberately to insult Mir Casim and "make him lose in respect and honour in the eyes of his people." Among the earliest and most conspicuous instances of Ellis's flouting the power of the Nabob was his order to arrest an officer of the government on a complaint from a *gomastha* of the English factory. In January 1762, Munseram, the Nabab's officer at Arrah, "stopped some opium belonging to Mr. Hay notwithstanding there was a *dustuck* with it and will not let it pass". Ellis ordered Carstairs to seize the man whose conduct had given offence. Carstairs, however, instead of carrying out the order as he was duty bound to do, wrote to the Nabob requesting him to reprimand his officer and release the opium". This forbearance of the Captain, as Vansittart called it, only served to irritate Ellis still more.

It may be mentioned here that Munseram was perfectly within his rights in seizing the opium owned by

Ellis had distinguished himself in the siege of Calcutta and lost a leg at the battle near Sealdah. For these services he was given a place in the Board superseding all other members. (*Long p. 166.*)

Henry Lushington had been in the Black Hole where he had allayed his thirst by sucking Holwell's sleeves. It was Lushington who forged Admiral Watson's signature on the Red Treaty and received 50,000 Rs. on the deposition of Sirajuddoulah. In 1750

a private trader who was cheating the Government of its dues by using a *dustuck* intended to protect only the Company's trade. The abuse of *dustucks* had become the common practice. Both Vansittart and Hastings have left very unpleasant pictures of this abuse. "Private Factors" wrote Vansittart on February 1, 1763 "set themselves up for judges of causes, particularly where their interests are concerned or that of their masters: beating and binding of officers of considerable station in the country government by soldiers and sepoys attending their orders and they forcibly took away goods; they dealt in all merchandise, fixed their own prices, extorted payment, hoisted English colors, forged passes, would give no account of themselves. Shops were shut up, villages abandoned and nothing was heard but outcries on the one hand against the tyranny and oppression of the English and their *gomasthas* and on the other against the insolence of the Nabob and his officers."¹

Hastings wrote in a similar strain of the "oppressions committed under the sanction of the English name and through the want of spirit in the Nabob's subject to oppose them," instances of which he observed on his way to Patna on April 1, 1762.

Lushington came to Bihar with Colonel Caillaud as his interpreter and was implicated in the plot for the assassination of the Shazadah. He is said to have been the person who put Caillaud's seal to the famous "paper of three seals" viz., of Mir Jaffer, Miran and Caillaud, which promised to one Conderoy, formerly Dewan of Camgur Khan, a lakh of rupees if he delivered the Shahzada into the hands of the Nabob or assassinated him. Caillaud was suspended on being tried but was acquitted.—See *Ante*, *Beveridge in the Calcutta Review* October 1884. Also Wheeler's *Early Records* pp. 286 & 312.

1. Long p. 301.

This insolent and high handed conduct of the English Factor was not peculiar to Patna. It had become very common after the revolution. "A party of sepoy" writes Hastings on October 14, 1763 "were sent to Sylhet by the gentlemen at Dacca who fired upon and killed one of the principal people of the place, afterwards made the zemindar prisoner and forcibly carried him away." But in point of insolence and high-handedness Mr. Ellis excelled all the other chiefs of factories.

Almost about the same time as that of the incident mentioned above another servant of the Nabob, Cojah Aratoon, an officer on the establishment of Gurgin Khan purchased 5 mds. of saltpetre from *Nuniyas* (saltpetre men) of the English. When Ellis heard of this he was in a fury. He caused the man to be arrested and sent to the Council in irons "having not the least prospect" he said "of any redress from the Nabob for this contempt of the *perwanah*." ¹ According to the terms of the agreement entered into by Clive with Mir Jaffar, the Nabob had the right of reserving 20,000 mds. of saltpetre for his own use. This could not but have been known to the chief at Patna as also the members of the Council at Calcutta but they preferred to ignore it. Some member suggested that the culprit should be publicly whipped, another that his ears should be cut off. "It required the utmost address and power of the President to get him sent back to his master." ² This exasperated Ellis.

1. Ellis to Governor January 28, 1762. *Vans. Narrative* Vol. I p. 322.

2. *Mill. Vol. III* p. 227.

Not many days after, Ellis¹ having heard that two English deserters were concealed in the Fort of 'Monghy wrote to the Deputy Nabob Rajballav about it and without waiting for his reply sent a party of sepoys to search the Fort for them. The Governor of the Fort, Sujan Singh, told them that there were no English deserters in the Fort and for ampler satisfaction offered to take two officers round the Fort. But he refused to admit into the Fort a body of armed men and threatened to fire upon the sepoys if they approached the walls. This Mr. Ellis regarded as "the highest excess of insolence" and refused to withdraw the sepoys till they had searched the Fort. He was supported by the Council and after a dispute of three months, the Nabob was persuaded to grant a search but no deserters were found. "An invalid Frenchman who had been in the Fort for some months and who was tempted by the offer of reward to reveal all that he knew of the subject declared that he had never seen a single European there."²

"By these repeated invasions of his government the pride of Nabob was deeply wounded and he complained to the President in bitter terms."³ But the President could not help him on account of the hostile attitude of the Council.

With a view to put an end to this unsatisfactory state of things and effect a reconciliation between the Nabob and Mr. Ellis, Vansittart proposed that a person in whom the Nabob had confidence should be sent by the Council to Patna. The Council accepted the proposal and their choice fell upon Warren Hastings, then the

1. *Ellis to President Feb. 13, 1762.*

2. *Thornton's History Vol. I p. 425.*

3. *Mill Vol. III p. 227*, Mir Casim's letters quoted in Vansittart *Narrative* Vol. I p. 327 etseq.

resident of Moradbag near Cossimbazaar. His mission as a peacemaker, however, was sadly handicapped when the Council added to his instructions the clause that "he should demand from Mir Cassim 20 lacs he had promised to pay which the President would not allow him to pay till the Company's debts had been cleared." It was a most unwarrantable demand to make and Amyatt probably suggested it "as a cruel jest at the Governor's expense," but it was greedily laid hold of by the Council and inserted among the instructions to Hastings. The mission thus was foredoomed to failure.

Hastings left Calcutta on the 9th April and reached Patna on the 2nd May where he had hoped to see Ellis. But that gentleman had gone to the Patna Chief's country residence at Singhiya and he remained there till, after a stay of five days, Hastings left Patna. Hastings wrote to Ellis from Sasseram remonstrating with him for his conduct; it elicited only an insolent reply.

When he met the Nabob, he warmly repudiated any unfriendliness to or jealousy of the English on his part but complained bitterly of the "acts of violence committed by Mr. Ellis before his face; insults on his people and the disturbances raised in the country." "My authority" he observed "has been rendered contemptible to all Hindusthan and my government in Behar has been sadly obstructed." As regards the demand of 20 lacs which the Council had also embodied in a representation to the Nabob, he stated that he had fully complied with his agreements and had not only paid off his debts but also at the instance and desire of Mr. Vansittart and of his own free will, given the Company 5 lacs over and above their just dues. "You now demand a sum of money from me" he added "which I have never borrowed of you, nor obliged myself to pay; nor have you in

any manner the least claim upon me. I owe nobody a single rupee nor will I pay your demand”.

Meanwhile the opposition members had already been thinking of annulling the installation of Mir. Casim on the throne of Murshidabad and thereby finding for themselves another opportunity for securing handsome presents. They made capital of the last paragraph of the Company's letter to Bengal dated the 30th Sept. 1761. in which they wrote “your advancing Jaffir Ally Cawn to the Subaship in the room of Surajuddoula was undoubtedly a necessary measure as well for the good of the country in general as for the interest of the Company in particular. Your afterwards deposing Jaffir Ally Cawn and setting Cossim Ally Cawn in his room, we hope also was done with the same view.....We must look upon the measures pursued as unavoidable ; at the same time we cannot help observing that it is by the great regard the Company always had to a faithful observance of their agreements they have acquired and hitherto preserved a reputation with the natives of India. We could have wished, therefore, the situation of affairs would have admitted keeping terms with Jaffir Ally Cawn that even the least handle for a pretence might not have been given to prejudice people to make use of to throw any reflection upon the transaction”. The attitude of the Council's mind could not but have been known to Mir Casim who had his spies everywhere and it deepened the suspicion with which he had always regarded English faith and English pledge with respect to himself.

Having failed in his mission Hastings returned to Calcutta. On his way back he wrote a letter to the President from Bhagalpore describing an evil which proved the proverbial last stick that broke the camel's back. It was the abuse of private trade by the Com-

pany's servants and it was on this question of private trade that the breach between the Company and the Nabob became complete. "I beg leave to lay before you" wrote Hastings on the 25th April 1762 "grievance which loudly calls for redress and will, unless duly attended to, render ineffectual any endeavours to create a firm and lasting harmony between the Nabob and the Company. I mean the oppressions committed under the sanction of the English name and through the want of spirit in the Nabob's subjects to oppose them". Then he goes on to give instances of oppression and injustice he had seen in course of his journey up and down the river. They were things but too well-known to the President, but, with the Council to oppose him in every direction, he was powerless to remedy the evil. The posture of affairs has been briefly and accurately summed up by a historian as follows; "Each party accused the other of violence. The Nabob complained that the illegal trade was upheld by the exercise of force ; the residents at the English factories alleged that even lawful trade of the Company was interrupted by the Nabob's servants, and on both sides there was some truth." Matters had come to such a pass that something must be done to meet the situation.

Vansittart who had just recovered from severe illness made up his mind to pay a visit to Monghyr which would help him to a "change of air" as also to a meeting with the Nabob. He set out on the 20th October with Hastings as his coadjutor, arrived at Monghyr on the 30th and was received by the Nabob with all the usual marks of respect and friendliness. It did not take him long to find out that the Nabob and Ellis could never be

friends yet he was optimistic enough to believe that they might be persuaded to keep their enmity buried within their own breasts. As regards the abuse of private trade after a long discussion he and Hastings got the Nabob's consent to a treaty for its regulation. Among other terms, which now appear to us so wise and reasonable but which to the interested eyes of the Company's servants looked preposterous, one was that the Company's servants should be allowed to carry on private trade on payment of a duty of 9 p. c.¹ at the time of the purchase of commodities. Vansittart did not doubt that he could easily get the treaty sanctioned by the Council. But he had reckoned without his host. For the time being, however, it seemed as if the troubles were over, as if the sum of 36,370 Rs. paid as the Governor's travelling expenses was well spent. Mir Casim evidently thought so, for he issued orders to his officers to demand duty of the private traders according to the terms of the treaty and started, immediately after the departure of the Governor, on his expedition to Bettiah and Nepal and with him went a representative of the Patna Factory to report on the feasibility of a trade in Nepal firs.²

The Governor and his assistant left for Patna from Monghyr where they arrived on the New Year's Day. Ellis had many complaints. One of them was that Nobat Roy on his installation as the Deputy Nabob did not pay

1. The native traders had to pay customs ranging from 5 to 20 p. c.

2. "The gentlemen at Patna" in their letter dated the 21st October 1726, advised the Council that there were no firs in Bettiah but plenty of them in Nepal to be had for cutting. The cost of carriage however would be very great and eat up the profits"—*Long p. 281.*

him a visit ; another was that the *Burbunna Gate* which was a small gate in the northwest corner of the city had been closed by the Nabob though originally it had been at the chief's own request. Ellis now wanted to have it opened as otherwise the servants of the factory had to go 500 or 600 yds to the west gate of the city ; the third was that the Nabob wanted to close a Ganj or market¹ that Ellis had opened without a grant from the Nabob or permission from the Company and named it Colonelgunje after Col. Caillaud. The Governor decided that the wicket should remain closed and that the market should be abolished. Thus having infuriated Ellis instead of soothing him he left Patna on the 5th January and returned to Calcutta to face his Council on the 18th.²

The Council met on the 15th Feb. and the two subsequent days and resolved that their President in concluding this agreement with Mir Casim had assumed a right to which he was not entitled ; that the regulations were dishonorable to Englishmen and that they tended to destroy all public and private trade ; that the Burbunna gate must be opened and the Nabob written to in peremptory terms to re-open it. The Council now consisted of

1. The Ganj had some times been thought to have been opened by Clive but Clive denied it in the most emphatic manner. "I am surprised to find myself accused of erecting Colonelgunje at Patna. To speak plainly, Barker, I have never established a Ganj in my life and never will, because I never approved of receiving duties on the necessities of life. Colonelgunje was created by Col. Caillaud and revived by Col. Cooke. The Committee have forbid this custom in future."—Clive to Barker 12th Aug. 1766. Malcolm's *Life*. Vol. III p. 69.

2. Mill says it was the 16th, Elphinstone the 18th which has been adopted by Firminger in his introduction to the "*Three Surgeons*."

what was called a full Board, being attended by members summoned from the distant factories, all except Patna and Chittagong, as also the two Commanders-in-Chief who ordinarily had no seats in the Council. Their proceedings began in February and lasted till the following April. They discussed the question of the right of private trade and all except the Governor and Hastings decided in its favour.

On his way back from Bettiah Mir Casim learnt that his orders giving effect to the terms of the treaty had been disregarded by the English factories and that there had been serious affrays between the Company's servants and his own officers at Dacca, Chittagong, Purneah and elsewhere. In Bihar Lieutenant Dowie had been despatched from Patna "to clear the Company's business and seize all who had interrupted it." The Lieutenant captured Akbar Ali Khan, the Nabob's Collector, and brought him prisoner to Patna. Mir Casim hearing of this outrage ordered a body of 500 sepoys to intercept the Lieutenant. They were too late for this, so they made for Taajepore where a small body of 12 sepoys had been left by Dowie to guard the saltpetre; four of the sepoys were killed and the rest surrendered. The captured sepoys and the *gomastha* were brought to the Nabob. The Nabob, however, still hesitated to break with the English, so having reprimanded the *gomastha* ordered the captives to be released. Weary of these affrays he resolved upon remitting duties of all kinds throughout his dominions. It meant a considerable loss to his exchequer but it would place the native traders on a par with the English merchants and put an effective bar on the lucrative private trade of the Company's servants. He published his order to that effect on the 8th March and communicated it to the Council in his letter dated

the 22nd of the same month. The intelligence transported the ruling part of the Council beyond all bounds of reason. "All declared it to be a violation of the Company's rights, some pronounced it to be an act of usurpation to remit the Emperor's customs without his leave, though they had accepted exemption and territories as little sanctioned by the Emperor; others denied the right of a Nabob whom they had raised to the Subadarship and supported by force of arms against the king, to employ the power with which they had been pleased to invest him to undermine their royal privileges and ruin their trade; and one member derided the notion of the Nabob's possessing any independence in his own territory and treated the assertion of such a right as more worthy of his hired agents than of such a Board". No one however, hinted at the danger with which this step of the Nabob threatened their *illicit* trade, the real pivot on which these sonorous sentiments revolved. The Governor and Hastings were the only members of the Council who supported the Nabob. Bad blood ran so high that in course of the discussion Batson struck Hastings. The Council resolved to write to the Nabob calling upon him to rescind his order and also to send a deputation for the purpose.¹ The deputation consisting of Messrs. Amyatt and Hay started from Calcutta on the 9th April.²

Meanwhile news of disturbances came from different parts of the country. The "gentlemen at Patna" apprehended a famine and resolved to purchase a stock of grain on account of the Company as they had reason to believe that no more boats with grain would be suffered

1. This was resolved at the Council meeting of the 7th March.

2. Mill gives the date as the 4th.

to pass Monghyr. The foudar at Rajmahal had begun intercepting the Company's *Daks*.¹

On hearing of this deputation the Nabob wrote on the 15th April that he had no objection to Mr. Amyatt's coming to Monghyr but he would not have troops or guns come the Patna way. No troops were sent but the "gentlemen at Patna" were instructed as to what they should do in case of an open rupture with the Nabob. One of the several alternatives suggested was that of capturing the city. Both sides knew that a war was inevitable and imminent and were prepared for it. It is difficult to make out why under such circumstances the Council still insisted upon sending the deputation and exposing it to dangers which they could not but have been aware of.

1. *Long. pp. 323 and 325.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DEATH OF AMYATT AND CAPTURE OF PATNA.

Peter Amyatt was an amiable and well-meaning man, honest according to the standard of honesty of the time, but neither able nor strong-minded.¹ He was, as we have seen, no fighter and he had been chosen the leader of the party against the Governor because of his seniority. He was only an imposing figure-head, a mere tool in the hands of Major Carnac and Ellis.

1. Amyatt arrived at Calcutta on 2nd August, 1742 when he must have been only fifteen. At the time of the capture of Calcutta he was the Chief of Jugdea and as such succeeded in rescuing "60,000 Rs. worth of the Company's effects." In 1760 he went to Patna as its Chief but left Bihar when Holwell was appointed Governor and his seniority was overlooked.

The Amyatts were a well-established family at Calcutta who possessed a house and other property there.

Peter Amyatt's widow married James Amyatt, her husband's cousin and executor who afterwards became the M. P. for Southampton. Afterwards we find him moving the President and Council at Fort William for permission to send agents to Patna and Rampur-Boalia "to collect his concerns". *Bengal Past & Present Vol. VI p. 374 and Vol. IV pp. 9 and 489. And also 'Three Surgeons at Patna' p. 35 note.*

He was dismissed from the service by the Court Letter of Feb. 8, 1764, a year after his death. *Long. p. 370.*

Amyatt does not appear to have been implicated in any of the questionable transactions of the time. He had refused to sign "the paper with the three seals" for the assassination of the Shahzade

All his minutes of dissent were written by Carnac who "corresponded with Ellis in cipher and, in fact, was the centre of all the correspondence of the malcontents throughout the civil service" (*Vansittart Vol. II* p 27). He was chosen to head the deputation because he was the only member of the Opposition for whom Mir Casim yet retained any regard, When he had demanded the removal of Ellis he had suggested Amyatt as one of those who might prove an acceptable successor.

Poor Amyatt had married a young lady,¹ a Miss Maria Wollaston, three days before he started on his fatal mission. He had with him Hay, Gulston, his "speaker and linguist" and James Wollaston, his brother-in-law. He was met on the way by his old friend, Golam Hossain, who had been sent by Mir Casim to sound his intentions and spy upon his movements. Before the deputation reached Monghyr the Nabob had the brothers Jagat Set, Mahatab Roy and Roy Swarup Chand, seized at Murshidabad and brought as prisoners to Monghyr. To the Nabob Vizier's request to spare

when it had been sent to him for his signature—"as a most infamous measure". *Court Dispatch, 30th Sept. 1761* quoted in *Wheeler's Early Records* p. 286.

Holwell spoke of him as the "only person who lay under no censure of suspicion from the service" (*Tracts*), Vansittart thought him to be a good but weak man. "This gentleman (was) amongst the violence of party rage universally beloved...Respected for his integrity by Mir Casim whose elevation he disapproved and whose independence he opposed, it was hoped that his character would give weight to the embassy". *Verelst's View* p. 48.

This remark of Verelst explains the reason why of the choice which Elphinstone calls "unfortunate" (*Elphinstone* p. 388).

1. The marriage entry is dated 6th April, 1763. Amyatt left Calcutta on the 9th.

their lives he refused to listen and the English protest against the outrage elicited from him only a contemptuous reply and added perhaps a fresh item to the difficulties in the way of an amicable settlement with the English.

Amyatt had an audience with the Nabob on the 15th May and, though received with all respect and cordiality, felt, even at the first interview, that the negotiations would be fruitless. They were not prospering when an incident happened that suddenly brought them to an end. Some boats with a supply of arms for the troops at Patna, dispatched, it was alleged, above two months ago, but unaccountably delayed on the way, arrived at Monghyr on the 26th. Mir Casim ordered the boats to be seized and refused to release them unless the troops were withdrawn from Patna, and Ellis, the Chief, who, he had heard, had been plotting to surprise the fort, was replaced by Amyatt, Macguire or Hastings. The Council directed Amyatt and Hay to leave Monghyr if Mir Casim refused to release the boats at once and quit the Court formally announcing a rupture. Mir Casim allowed Amyatt to depart but kept Hay as a hostage. He should be released, he said, as soon as the Nabob's officers who were prisoners in Calcutta had been set free and sent to Monghyr. Amyatt and Wollaston with their attendants under Ensign Cooper started for Calcutta on the 22nd June leaving Hay and Gulston with the Nabob.

Meanwhile the relation between the English at Patna and the Nabob's Governor, Mehdi Khan, had reached the breaking point. Both parties had been preparing for war knowing it inevitable. Ellis had provided himself with scaling ladders and platforms for taking the city by storm, he had thrown down houses

at Bankipore to make entrenchments for the troops and had worked out all the details of a surprise. The Governor had been strengthening the defences of the city and tampering with the Company's sepoys. On June 24th Ellis received news of Amyatt's dismissal and the same night he surprised the city and carried it by escalade.¹ After the capture of the city the troops dispersed to plunder. "They leisurely plundered the houses of the citizens without leaving in some of them so much as a bit of straw : a treatment the more surprising as it had never been experienced from any English army."² The Nabob's Officers were seized with a panic. "Shah Barkat Ali confounded at the sudden revolution made the best of his way through the *Rani's Wicket* and fled along the water-side without knowing whither he was going. Mahommed Amin shut himself up in Chahal Satoon and prepared to defend himself. The Hindu Colonel, Lal Singh, assembled his people, shut up the gates of the citadel³ and resolved to stand his ground."⁴ But Mehdi Khan the Governor left the city and retreated towards Monghyr. At Futwa he met

1. The majority of the Council had issued orders to Mr. Ellis giving him the power (if he thought it right to exercise it) to anticipate the Nabob's designs by seizing upon the citadel of Patna (Malcolm's *Clive Vol. II p. 283*).

Also Fullarton's Letter to Major Adams at Joussy. *Van. III p. 377*.

2. *Seir Vol. II p. 473. Elphinstone p. 396*. Proceedings of the Council on "Further intelligence from Patna received in a letter from the Dutch Director, July 11, 1763—*Long p. 327*.

3. The fort was on the western side of the city, the factory was just outside the eastern wall. They were thus separated by the whole length of the city which was about a mile and a half long from wall to wall.

4. *Seir Vol. II*.

a detachment of the Nobob's troops under General Mercar and returned to Patna. The city was recovered with ease; the English retired into their Factory which was besieged. After a four days' seige the English numbering about 300 men set fire to the warehouses and stables and at night evacuated the factory. They got into boats and fled towards Chupra to take refuge in the territories of Shujauddoula. At Manjhi they were forced to make a stand, further retreat having been cut off by a detachment of the Nabob's troops from Buxar under Sumroo. A few were killed and the rest surrendered on July 1, 1763. They were taken prisoners, and carried some to Patna, others to Monghyr.

Elated with this success Mir Casim "issued general orders to his officers to seize and make prisoners of the English wherever they were to be found¹; among the rest to stop Mr. Amyatt on his way to Calcutta and send

1. *Mill Vol. III p. 239.*

Seir says that he commanded them "to put those perfidious English to the sword wherever they should find them. It is uncertain whether he may have comprised in this order Mr. Amyatt himself with all those of his retinue".

But Mir Casim repeatedly asserted that he never gave orders for the murder of Amyatt and that he never did wish it. In his letter to Major Adams dated the 9th September, 1763 he wrote "With this opinion it was that the *aumils* of Murshidabad killed Mr. Amyatt. But it was by no means agreeable to me that this gentleman should be killed".

He made the same assertion before Dr. Fullarton after the Patna massacre. "He declared he had never given orders for killing Mr. Amyatt but after receiving the advice of Mr. Ellis having attacked Patna he had ordered all his servants to take and *imprison* all the English in the provinces wherever they could find them".—Fullarton's *Narrative submitted to the Council on 3rd Novr. 17 3.*

him back to Monghyr with his retinue''. The factory at Cossimbazaar was plundered and some of his over-zealous officers put to death a few prisoners they had taken in different parts of the country. But this appears to have been against the wishes of Mir Casim.

Mahomed Taqui Khan, the general of the Nabob at Murshidabad, was in camp between Murshidabad and Cossimbazaar when Amyatt's boats came down. With a view to conceal his real intention he had an entertainment prepared, and sent his steward, Aga Ali, to invite Amyatt. Amyatt was asked to bring to his boats but he refused and by way of reply fired upon the Nabob's people. The result was what might have been anticipated. The boats were boarded and in the scuffle that ensued Amyatt and his brother-in-law were both killed. A *havildar* and two sepoys escaped and took the news to Calcutta on the 4th July.¹

Amyatt's death took place in a scuffle brought on by his refusal to bring to his boats when ordered to do so by the Nabob's officers. That is the account given by Haji Mustapha, the translator of *Seir* and it seems to be better supported than most incidents in history generally are. On an occasion like this the disinterested testimony of Aga Ali, his friend and neighbour for full 16 years, and the three dancing girls who took part in the entertainment provided for Amyatt is more reliable than the evidence of those who had an interest to serve or favour to seek.

It is corroborated by the report made to Dr. Anderson on the 25th July in his prison at Chahal Satoon "by his boys from the Dutch Factory" and by the account given him by Messrs Benett and Thompson of the Cossimbazar Factory. See *Anderson's Diary under 25th July and 11th Aug. 1763*.

1. The event happened, says, Firminger on the 3rd or 4th. It must have happened earlier for the news to reach Calcutta on the 4th.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THIRD REVOLUTION IN BENGAL AND PATNA.

The rupture between Mir Casim and the English was now complete.

Meanwhile neither party had been idle. Mir Casim had opened negotiations with the Nabob of Oudh and the Emperor early in March. He had his army thoroughly reorganised ; arms and guns he had manufactured in large quantities at Monghyr and "they were finer than those with which the company's soldiers were supplied from Europe" ;¹ he had kept his treasury full. His forces, as reckoned by the English, consisted of 15,000 horses ; 10 or 12 battalions of sepoys, 17 guns well-mounted and 170 Europeans. The chief strength of his army lay in the infantry, most of which had been formed by Gurgan Khan and had Armenian commandants to the battalions ; the rest were led by "Sumroo."

The Council had already ordered Captain Lang to advance from Giretti to Kalna and thence to Murshidabad and Captain Knox had been directed to march from Midnapore through Burdwan and Birbhum towards Monghyr. They had determined as early as June 20,

1. "The fire-locks manufactured at Monghyr" writes Mustapha, "proved better than the best Tower-proofs sent to India for the Company's use ; such was the opinion the English officers gave when they made the comparison by order of the Council of Calcutta. The flints were all Rajmehal agate and the metal more mellow".—*Scir Vol. II p. 421 n.*

that in the event of a rupture with Mir Casim, Mir Jaffar should be restored to the *Masnad*. On receipt of the news of the death of Amyatt which reached Calcutta on the 4th July and the rumour of the outbreak of hostilities at Patna they opened negotiations with Mir Jaffar. The draft of the treaty had already been prepared. It received Mir Jaffar's approval on the 7th when a proclamation was issued announcing his re-instatement. It was signed on the 10th and the next day Mir Jaffar was on his way to join the army near Cutwa.

The Treaty, besides confirming the grant made by Mir Casim of the districts of Midnapore, Burdwan and Chittagong for defraying the expenses of the British troops employed "in the defence of the country," granted exemption to the trade of the Company's servants from all duties except $2\frac{1}{2}$ p. c. which they offered to pay of their own accord on the single article of salt, rescinded the ordinance of Mir Cassim for the general remission of all commercial imposts, made over half the produce of saltpetre of Purneah and of lime in Sylhet to the English and required Mir Jaffar to maintain an army of 12 thousand horse and 12 thousand foot, pay 30 lacs to the Company and make good individual losses. It further empowered the Company to open a Mint at Calcutta and coin *sicca* rupees.

Mir Jaffar joined his army on the 17th; on the 19th was fought the well-contested battle of Cutwa.¹ Taqui Khan, the General of the troops at Murshidabad was killed and Mir Jaffar made his triumphal entry into

1. The loss of the battle of Cutwa and the fall of Murshidabad were due as much to the English valor as to the dissensions between the general and the Deputy Governor which prevented hearty co-operation—*Scir Vol. II p. 485 n.*

Murshidabad. After four days the army marched out again and met Mir Casim's forces at Gheria on 2nd August.¹ The battle lasted four hours and ended in the victory of the English. All the enemy's guns and 150 boats, laden with military and other stores among which were those Mir Casim had captured at Patna,² were taken. Mir Jaffar halted here for a few days and then marched forward again to Uduanulla which he reached on the 11th August. "At this place the southern hill approached the Ganges; the pass they formed was defended by a fort and was now entirely closed up by entrenchments thrown upon the occasion." Here Mir Casim's army made its last despairing stand to block the only way of advance into Behar.

The repeated misfortunes which came, one treading upon the heels of another, soured the temper of Mir Casim which was none too angelic and the defection and lukewarm conduct of his nobles made him more suspicious than ever. He sent his family and his treasures to the stronghold of Rhotas and made up his

1. This was the second battle of Gheria. At the first battle fought in 1740 Serferaz Khan was overthrown by Aliverdi.

2. Caraccioli's *Clive* Vol. I p. 91.

3. *Elphinstone* p. 399. See also Cosson's description of the place and the plan of battle in *Bengal Past and Present* Vol. V pt. 10 p. 165. "The country was one intersected with nullas and at the time of the siege, for it was more of a siege than a battle, the country must have been flooded and treacherous. The Ganges flows on the right of the position and the left was protected by nullas and flooded fields. The entrenchments consisted of a ditch 60 feet broad and 29 feet high and, when one takes into consideration that the entrenchments extended over a mile, it might be understood what a mighty work Mir Casim had prepared to block the only way to advance".

mind to dispatch his prisoners who were too numerous to be kept in confinement and too dangerous to be set at liberty. Raja Ramnarain, Raja Rajballav and his son, Roy Royan Umed Roy and his son, the zemindars of Tikari and Shah Abdullah, the Superintendent of the Hall of Audience were killed and their bodies were thrown into the Ganges. The brothers Jagat Sett had to follow suit; they were thrown into the river from a tower of the castle at Monghyr.¹

1. The manner of death of the prisoners differs according to different accounts.

Surgeon Anderson heard from "a native servant lately come from Monghyr that Raja Rajballav and his son were put in a boat and drowned"—*Anderson's Diary* under 19, Aug. 1763

The author of *Seir Mutaquerhin* had heard it said that Ramnarain was thrown into the Ganges with a bag of sand fastened to his neck—*Vol. II p. 493*. Accounts also differ in respect of the place and manner of death of the Sett brothers. Golam Hossain says that they were hacked to pieces at Barh *after the battle* of Uduanalla. But Mustapha from the general report of the time and the relation of *Chuni*, a faithful servant of Mahtab Roy, feels quite convinced that the Setts were thrown into the river from the tower of the Monghyr castle *before the battle*. *Seir p. 504 note*.

Dr. Anderson who had to depend upon the reports of the native servants mentions at one place of his *Diary* (Aug. 17), that the Setts were killed at Monghyr, at another (Sept. 28th) that they were alive and at Barh.

Major Adams in his letter to the President dated the 18th Oct. writes "And the Seaks (Setts) were about the same time put to death near Baar and their bodies were not permitted to be burnt but exposed".

Mir Casim was not present at the battle of Udua Nulla (*Mill III p. 242*) Mr. Cosson is wrong in suggesting that the army at Udua was "directed by Mir Casim himself" *Bengal Past and Present, Vol. V pt. 10 p. 164*.

Mir Casim was at Bhagalpur. He knew that he was no

Mir Casim moved out of the fort after giving these inhuman orders and pitched his camp at a short distance from the town. On the eve of the battle of *Uduanulla* he had moved down to Bhagalpore and was encamped at Champaganore.

The English army, as we have seen, had arrived at Udua on the 11th August. Harassed daily by numerous bodies of cavalry both in front and rear they were detained there for nearly a month. The final engagement took place on the 5th. September and ended in a complete victory of the English.

The news of the defeat reached Mir Casim at Champaganore and drove him to despair. "The man seemed broke in two" when he heard it. He had invited Camgar Khan who had the reputation of being a great military leader to come out of his hills and join him. He had come but he left him immediately after the battle finding that the Nabob's star was no longer on the ascendant. Mir. Casim's soldiers showed signs of disaffection. He tarried a few days at Champaganore to allow his retreating army to come up and then left for Monghyr.

At Monghyr he made but a short stay, only long enough to enable him to secure some of his effects and refresh his troops. He then marched towards Patna carrying with him the English prisoners who were then in the Fort. He wrote on the 9th Sept. to Major Adams

general and we know from the accounts given of his character and his conduct on crucial occasions that "personal bravery did not form a part of his nature". He left the battle to be fought by his generals, Sher Ali Khan, Assadulla Khan, Mercar and Sumroo. Gurgan was not sent to the front as Mir Casim suspected his fidelity.

who was following him and was then at *Sakrigully* that he would put the prisoners to death if the army continued to advance. Not long after this the Major received from Ellis and Hay "a noble letter requesting him that no consideration for them might impede the operations of the army."¹ And Major Adams did not cease to advance because of the threat.

On the way to Patna on the banks of the Rehva Gurghan Khan was murdered in his tent one night by the orders of the Nabob who suspected him of treachery.²

1. *Elphinstone*, p. 401.

2. Between "Sovage Guree and Nabobgung" *Long* p. 333. *Rehva* is the *Rahunalla* or the *Kiul*. Golam Hossain says that he was murdered by his own soldiers who demanded their arrear pay and were answered by the general with his characteristic insolence. This is also the story told by Maharaja Kalyan Singh in his diary (*B & O R. S. J. Vol. 5 pt. 1*) Mustapha, Seir's translator refuses to place any credence in this story. He thinks that Gurghan Khan was carrying on a treasonable correspondence with his brother Cojah Petruse who had been brought with the English army for that purpose. Mir Casim who had his spies everywhere probably had come to know it and so kept Gurghan Khan with him at Bhagalpore instead of allowing him to go against the English at Uduanulla where he had to put forth his supreme effort and so naturally should have sent there his Commander-in-Chief under other circumstances.

There cannot be any doubt that Cojah Petruse attempted to tamper with the fidelity of the Armenian generals and that the English carried him with the army for that purpose :

"We have likewise ordered Cojah Petruse" wrote the President to Major Adams on 8th July 1763 "to accompany the army and we desire you will keep him under such restraints and make such use of him as you think necessary for the good of the service".

In his petition dated 21st Nov. 1763 to the President and Council at Calcutta, when he had been imprisoned as the Nabob's spy, Cojah Petruse urged in his vindication that "at Uduanalla

The English prisoners were sent in advance and arrived at Patna on the 11th or 12th September. "Messrs Ellis and Guentree were in palanquins; Lushington, Smith, Lieutenant Bowen, Ensign McLeod and one other gentleman were on horseback; the rest were in irons, some in dooleys and some in hacknies."¹ Mir Cassim did not reach Azimabad (Patna) till the 4th of the next month. He encamped in Ramnarain's garden and heard of the siege of Monghyr and a rumour of its fall through the treachery of its Governor.² This fresh misfortune maddened him, transformed the man into a demon and he ordered the massacre of the English prisoners at Patna.

The prisoners had been accommodated in Haji Ahmed's house, Chahal Satoon and the Fort. There³

he by the direction of Major Adams wrote two letters to Mercar and Aratoon, two Armenian officers who amongst others commanded the enemy's forces and intimated to them that as the English always favoured the Armenians they in justice ought to direct their steps towards the good of the English."—*Long. p. 329.*

1. *Fullarton's Diary, 13th Sept.*

2. Mill and Beveridge say that it was the *news* of the fall of the Fort that drove Mir Cassim to this inhuman act. But the Fort was not taken till the 11th Oct. and the massacre began on the 5th.

Major Adams in his letter dated the 11th October writes to the President "I have the pleasure to acquaint you that we are now in possession of Monghyr, the breach being *last night* practicable I intended to have stormed the Fort *this morning* but the enemy prevented us by surrendering at discretion."

Golam Hossain is right. It was the *rumour* that the English had captured the fort by treachery that led him to carry out the threat he had held out to Major Adams.

3. Ellis to Major Adams dated 4th October.

were 49 in Haji Ahmed's house including Ellis, Hay Lushington and Gulston; Hay and 24 others were in irons. There were 8 or 9 in Chahal Satoon including Doctors Campbell and Anderson. Fullarton alone was in the Fort¹ and he was the sole survivor of the massacre. The prisoners in Haji Ahmed's house were killed on the 5th October.² The native commanders refused to butcher unarmed men. "It is a work for the scavengers" they said. But Sumroo accepted it, went into the house with two companies of sepoys, had the prisoners brought into the inner court and cut or shot them down, knocking down a few himself with a bamboo stick. Their dead bodies were thrown next morning into two wells within the house which were filled up³. Lushington though much wounded ran at the man who had shot him and wrenched the sword out of his hand and cut him down but himself fell overpowered by number.⁴ So died like

".....Since our leaving Monghyr we have been treated ill; there are 49 in this prison, 25 of whom are in irons and in that number is Mr. Hay.....In another prison there are 8 or 9 gentlemen.

1. "I was sent from Monghyr to Patna and confined alone in the Killa." *Fullarton's Narrative*.

2. Fullarton in his letter to the President dated the 3rd Novr. 1793 writes "On the 7th October *two days* after our gentlemen had been barbarously murdered at Patna etc."

Dr. Anderson in his Diary under Thursday the 6th Oct.— "Heard this morning that Mr. Ellis and 47 gentlemen were cut off *last night* so that our fate must be in 24 hours for which God prepare us all."

3. *Carraccioli's Clive* I p. 94.

4. The account of Lushington's death is taken from Mustapha's *Note Secr. II* p. 505.

See also Cotton's letter to the *Statesman* quoted before.

a hero the man who had forged Watson's signature in the *Lal Coggedge* (the Red Treaty) and drawn up and forged the signature of Caillaud in "the paper with the three seals." "Nothing became so well in life as the parting of it." This last feat of his has been recorded in glowing language in the inscription on his tomb in Eastborne Parish Church, which concludes "His race was short (being only 26 years when he died) but truly glorious. The rising generation must admire. May they imitate so bright an example".

The next morning when they came to bury the bodies they found Gulston breathing and they talked among themselves of saving his life but the young man giving them abusive language he was taken by the legs and thrown with others into the fosse.

The infant child of Ellis was not spared, says Captain Broome, and probably its mother also shared its fate.¹

1. Captain Broome's *History of the Bengal Army*.

I have found no grounds for this assertion. Neither Golam Hossain nor the Diarists, Drs. Anderson and Fullarton, mention any woman or child being murdered. Major Adams in his letter to the President in which he gives an account of the massacre 18th Oct. 1763) says nothing about it.

On the other hand there are facts to show that the women and children had been probably left behind at Monghyr. Dr. Anderson in his Diary under 19th Sept. writes "Lady Hope and some other women are left behind." Golam Hossain says: "When Ali Ibrahim requested the Nabob to release the women he replied in a peevish tone 'Where one might get boats enough for such a multitude?'"

Lady Hope, the wife of Lieutenant Hope, we know, was not one of the victims though her husband was. She afterwards married a Company's servant named Lambert whose memory is still preserved by the octagonal pleasure-house at Baraset near Calcutta, under which his ashes (he was cremated) were deposited. *Bengal Past & Present Vol. II p. 509.*

The prisoners of Chahal Satoon were made away with on the 11th.¹ Fifty-one English gentlemen were thus slaughtered in cold blood together with a hundred others of inferior rank.²

Lastly, we may add that Mahomedan rulers have always been kind and considerate in their treatment of women. The officers of Sirajuddowlah after the capture of Calcutta sent away the ladies they found there, under proper escort, to the English ships at Fulta. Commenting upon this incident Mr. S. C. Hill writes "It was not the custom of the Mahomedans to ill-treat ladies."—*Records Vol. I. xcvi.*

Verelst quotes from Dow another tribute to this trait of the Indian character. (*View p. 138*) "Women are so sacred in India that even the common soldiery leave them unmolested in the midst of slaughter and devastation. The Harem is a sanctuary against all the licentiousness of victory; and ruffians covered with the blood of the husband shrink back with compassion from the secret apartment of his wives."

1. Dr. Anderson who was imprisoned at Chahal Satoon heard of the murder of the prisoners at Haji Ahmed's house on the 6th and feared that similar fate would overtake him in 24 hours. But it did not do so. He was alive on the 9th. A letter written by him on that day and addressed to his friend Dr. Davidson has been published by Dr. Chevers in the *Calcutta Review*, July 1884 :

"Since my last, his Excellency is completely defeated and in consequence obliged to retreat to Jaffar Khan's garden yesterday and proposes to come to the city today. Sumroo with his sepoy's arrived here last night and I suppose to effect his wicked design, for Mr. Killy (Ellis?) and 43 (47) gentlemen with him were massacred and an equal number of soldiers and us yet remain. I expect my fate to night".

Fullarton in his *Narrative* writes "In spite of my efforts to save them the gentlemen at Chahal Setoon (Dr. Campbell made t "Chelsea Town") 7 in number were killed on the 11th October.

2. Appendix to the "*Three Surgeons*", Wheeler's *Early Records p. 507*

Dr. Fullarton who had ingratiated himself with the *grandees* of the country by assisting them professionally and had once been in high favour with Mir Casim himself was the only person spared. The Nabob wanted his mediation for an accommodation with the English. Fullarton refused to act as a mediator as after these crimes of his the Council at Calcutta could not possibly entertain a proposal of this nature. He was allowed to remain in the city on Ali Ibrahim Khan's standing his security and he was afterwards permitted to go to the Dutch Factory whence he made his way to Hajipore where there was a detachment of English troops under Captain Wedderburn. He joined Major Adams at *Jully* (Joussy) on the 15th October.¹

The news of the massacre was reported to the Council by Major Adams from his camp at Burrie in his letter dated the 18th Octr. The source of his information was "Assuck, Consumah to Mr. Albright, a private merchant killed in the massacre."² The letter was received by the Council on the 25th with profound sorrow and indignation. They met on the next day and it was

1. Dr. Fullarton was one of those medical men who played such an important part in the early history of the Company. He was appointed "Surgeon to the Calcutta General Hospital in succession to Holwell in 1744." He was in Calcutta at the time of the siege and capture of the city and the next year was its Mayor. In 1760 he came to Patna and distinguished himself greatly as we have seen, at the battle of Masimpore and siege of Patna. Subsequently he got into bad odour with the Council as one of Nundakumar's associates, was censured in 1766 and probably dismissed from the service..... Crawford's *List of Surgeons Bengal Past and Present*. Also *Seir-ul-Mutaquerin* vol II.

2. According to this account the massacre at Haji Ahmed's house took place on the 6th October.

agreed and ordered "that a general deep mourning should be observed in the settlement for the space of 24 days to commence next Wednesday the 2nd November;¹ that the morning of that day should be set apart and observed as a public fast and humiliation and suitable prayers and that the evening before, immediately after the firing of the 8 o'clock gun, minute guns should be fired from the ships and the Fort." A proclamation was issued promising one lac of rupees to any person or persons who would seize and deliver up Casim Ali Khan and Rs. 40,00 for the apprehension of Somru. On June 18, 1764 the Council decided to purchase Haji Ahmed's House² from the Nabob and the ground² thereunto belonging, to have the house entirely demolished and the whole ground railed in in a square in the centre of which the monument should be erected agreeably to the plan to be prepared and despatched by the Council to Patna afterwards."³

1. It was on a Wednesday that the Englishmen at Haji Ahmed's house were massacred.

This Haji Ahmed was the elder brother of Nabob Aliverdi. He came to Patna where his son, Haibat Jung, was the Governor in disgust with his brother who would not make him the Foujdar of Hugli. He had amassed great wealth the fame of which led Shumshere Khan, the rebel Afghan leader, to put him to death after cruel tortures that lasted 17 days (1748). *See Ante*.

2. *Long p. 381.*

3. This is the Patna cemetery. The monument does not stand in the centre but in a corner of the burying ground about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of the Chowk. It is said to have been built over one of the wells into which the dead bodies had been thrown after the massacre.

The list of names in the inscription on the obelisk put up in 1800 was prepared without sufficient care as it contains the names of many who were killed in battle or died elsewhere. *Beveridge's City of Patna Cal. Rev. April 1883.*

CHAPTER XXX.

THE FALL OF MIR CASIM.

After the battle of Uduanulla and the hasty retreat of Mir Casim with his shattered forces, the English army under Major Adams, with whom was the new-made Nabob, Mir Jaffar, met with no resistance till they came to Monghyr which capitulated after a short siege on the 10th October. From Monghyr the army advanced to Patna. On hearing of the approach of the enemy Mir Casim decamped from Patna leaving a garrison in the Fort for the defence of the city and retreated to Bucrem (Bikram) "a town 22 miles from Azimabad now in ruins." From here he sent a detachment of one thousand horse under the command of his nephew to reinforce the garrison who put up a gallant defence. But the ruinous fortifications were not calculated to offer a prolonged resistance and Patna was taken by storm on Nov. 6, 1763.

Mir Casim offered no further resistance. He retreated from town to town, his own commanders deserting upon him and plundering his baggage whenever they found an opportunity, till he reached *Nelitoo* on the further side of the river Sone where he halted for a few days to allow his family and his treasures to come up from Rhotas. Here he was advised to shut himself up in the fortress of Rhotas and carry on a guerilla war with the English till they were forced to make peace on terms advantageous to him or to retreat into Bundelkhund and join the Mahrattas. But he would do neither. He had made

up his mind to cross into Oudh and throw himself on the protection of the Emperor and Shujauddoulah, the Nabob of Oudh. He marched to the Karamnasa and there encamped to wait for the return of the messenger he had sent to the court of Oudh. His messenger soon returned and brought with him a parcel containing a copy of the Koran on the blank leaves of which were Shujauddoulah's safe conduct and a promise of help under his hand and seal. Mir Casim crossed the river, entered Raja Bulwant Singh's (Raja of Benares) country and encamped on the bank of the Ganges. He was warmly received by the Emperor and his Vizier (Shujauddoulah) and an agreement was made that they would help Mir Casim to recover his dominions, if Mir Casim undertook to pay 11 lacs a month to the Vizier for the expenses of the army.

Meanwhile the English army had advanced to the Karmanasa. They encamped on its bank and waited there expecting to see Mir Casim surrendered to them by his so-called protectors or cast adrift stripped of his wealth. In this situation an alarming disaffection¹ broke out among the troops of the English who thought that their reward had not been proportionate to the importance and difficulties of their service. The discontent was fomented by the emissaries of the enemy and desertions became frequent. "On the 11th

1. The disaffection broke out after the departure of Adams. This is not the first instance of a mutiny among the English troops in Bihar. Dr. Ives has given the description of one that broke out among the troops of Coote at Barh when marching in pursuit of Law. Nor was this the last as we shall see before long. The universal greed of wealth that pervaded the Company's service, both civil and military, was chiefly responsible for this state of general lack of discipline.

February 1764, the European battalions stood to their arms and after loading their pieces and fixing their bayonets took possession of the artillery parks and marched towards Karamnasa. The Sepoys were also in motion but by the exertion of their officers a greater part of them were induced to return. Of the Europeans the English, with few exceptions, desisted and came back ; the rest, in number about 300, of whom some were Germans and the greater part were French, proceeded towards Benares."¹ The Nabob, Mir Jaffar, was brought to the malcontents who had not deserted and was made to promise them a donation of 10 lacs. This had the effect of restoring order in the camp for the time being.

Things were in this state when Major Carnac assumed command. Major Adams² had retired and Major Knox his successor, had fallen ill.³ So Carnac had to be reinstated in service and sent to Bihar. Carnac heard of the advance of the enemy from Benares. A fresh outbreak of discontent which could not be soothed into peace by a fresh donation and in course of which a native officer was blown from the mouth of the gun for having attempted to induce his company to desert and a failure of provisions which helped to fan this discontent, compelled the English Commander to retire from the frontier and fall back upon Patna where he finally took up his position.

Shujauddoulah with the Emperor and Mir Casim now crossed the Ganges early in April 1764 and advanced

1. *Mill Vol. III p. 224.*

2. His health had become much injured, he obtained leave and returned to Calcutta intending to proceed to England but died at the Presidency on the 16th January, 1764.

3. Major Knox died at Patna on the 28th January, 1764. *Hills "Randfurlic Knox" in J. B. & O. R. S.*

at the head of a huge army towards Patna, "plundering and burning to the distance of 5 or 6 miles in every direction," depopulating the country and alienating the sympathy of the fleeing inhabitants. Arriving before Patna he made an attack on the 3rd. May but it was repulsed with heavy slaughter. "From that day till the 30th the enemies hovered about Patna, continually shifting their position and keeping the English in perpetual expectation of a renewed attack, without allowing them an opportunity, such at least as Carnac thought it prudent to seize, of acting on the offensive."¹ During this period of inactivity Shujauddoulah opened correspondence with Mir Jaffar and made overtures to the English, "but as the English would listen to no proposal without the preliminary condition of his surrendering Mir Casim, Sumroo and the deserters, and as the pretensions of Shujauddaulah extended to nothing less than the province of Bihar, it led to no agreement."²

Meanwhile there had taken place a great change in the Council at Fort William. The opposition had lost its strength till at last it had almost wholly disappeared. Vansittart had now the support of his Council. When he proposed to return to England on the expiry of his term, they unanimously requested him to remain till the country was completely settled. The Government was, therefore, able to act with firmness and consistency. The Council insisted upon Carnac's giving up the Fabian policy and striking a decisive blow. The Major and his officers were of a different opinion and the Major, therefore, applied for leave which was readily granted. Major Hector Munro was summoned from

1. *Mill. Vol. p. 245.*

2. *Elphinstone pp. 407-8.*

Bombay. He came with some reinforcements, native and European, and took up the command in Bihar early in July.¹

The rains having now set in, Shuja retreated to Buxar. Baulked in his expectation of an easy victory and failing in his attempts at negotiations, Shuja began to think of a plan for giving up Mir Casim. It was not difficult to find an excuse. He called upon Mir Casim to pay the promised subsidy and, on behalf of the Emperor, demanded that the arrears of revenue due from his Subah should be cleared off immediately. Mir Casim saw through Shuja's designs. He pleaded his inability to meet these demands, abandoned his tents and property and appeared publicly in the garb of a Fakir. To avoid scandal Shuja was compelled to desist but he instigated Sumroo to march with his battalion, surround Mir Casim's tent and demand payment of his arrears of pay. Casim Ali paid him from out of his concealed hoard but dismissed him from his service and ordered him to restore the guns and muskets of his battalion which were his property. Sumroo treated his order with contempt and went away, muskets and all, to encamp among the Vizier's troops. Shujauddoulah now threw off his mask, imprisoned Mir Casim and seized all his property.

Things equally disgraceful were happening in the English camp. When Munro assumed command he found the troops, the Europeans as well as the sepoy, extremely mutinous, frequently deserting to the enemy, threatening to carry off their officers, and demanding

1. *Elphinstone* p. 431. According to Mill it was in May that Munro assumed charge.

higher pay and large donations from the Nabob. The day after Munro had arrived at Chupra, a battalion of sepoys marched off to join the enemy. They were brought back by a detachment of Europeans and after a drumhead courtmartial 24 ringleaders were ordered to be blown from guns. This drastic measure had a wholesome effect followed as it was by a termination of the state of inactivity in which the army had been kept for months. The rains being now over Munro advanced to Buxar where he found Shuja-ud-doulah strongly entrenched. He arrived before the town on the 22nd September. The next morning the enemy came out and gave battle which began at 9 in the morning and lasted till midday and ended in the defeat and retreat of the Nabob.

After the battle of Buxar which Mill describes "as one of the most critical and important victories in the history of the British Wars in that part of the globe," Munro crossed the boundary of Bihar and advanced towards Benares with the Emperor who had thrown himself on the protection of the English and was now marching along with them. Shujah again opened negotiations but they came to nothing for he could not or would not comply with the demands of the English for the surrender of Mir Casim whom he had allowed to escape the day before the battle of Buxar and also Sumroo whom he had taken into his service.

The English army continued to advance towards Allahabad and besieged Chunar which lay in the way. A practicable breach was made but the assaults failed, and the siege was raised when Shuja-ud-doulah approached with his army. Major Munro waited for a general action but no battle was fought. The two armies long remained in a state of quiescence and before activity could be resumed Major Munro had relinquished

his command and quitted India with a handsome fortune.¹ But before he left Benares he had made the Emperor grant a *farman* dated the 29th December, 1764, by which he gave the Company the country of Gazipore and the rest of the Zemindary of Raja Bulawant Singh "the aforesaid Rajah paying revenues to the Company"² To make a fortune, and procure a *farman* like the above within a year was no bad work for a man who "was entirely unacquainted with the language of the country, as well as the manners and customs of the people".³

Munro was succeeded by General Carnac who had been dismissed by the Court's letter of the 8th Feb. 1764 but had afterwards been honourably restored and made a Brigadier General⁴ Before he could come up from Calcutta and assume command, Sir Robert Fletcher who had been left in charge of the army, took Allahabad. Shujauddoulah fled to the Rohillas and opened negotiations with the Marhattas under Mulhar Rao Holkar. Sumroo deserted him and with his disciplined sepoys and 300 Europeans entered the service of the Jats at Agra. In the skirmishes that followed, success attended the English and Shujahuddoulah convinced of the

1. Major Munro received from Raja Bulawant Singh £10,000 and from the Nabob Vizier £3,000, and the officers of his staff, from the Nabob £3,000. He also obtained a *Jaihgir* from the Emperor of £12,500 a year which he delivered to Mir Jaffar—*Mill III p. 259.*

It was charged on the Murshidabad treasury, the last dividend of 58,000 Rs. was paid in 1775.

2. *Verelst. p. 194.*

3. *Long p. 410.*

4. *Long 370.* Captain Staples in the *Calcutta Review* of Dec. 1850 p. 529 describes him as "more skilful in negotiating with the Directors at home than skilful in defeating the enemy in the field".

hopelessness of any further resistance presented himself almost alone before the English general on the 27th May, 1765, and threw himself unconditionally on the generosity of the British Government. The settlement with him and the Emperor was made by Lord Clive who had been vested "with the powers of the Commander-in-chief, President and Governor in Bengal" and had arrived at Calcutta on the 3rd May.¹ He left Calcutta on June, 25 and reached Benares in the beginning of August. The famous Treaty of Benares was signed on the 16th by the Emperor and the Vizier. "On a payment of £500,000 Sujah was restored to all his dominions with the exception of the districts of Allahabad and Corah which were ceded to the Emperor. No restraint was imposed upon his independence but a defensive alliance was agreed upon, Shuja agreeing to pay the expenses of the Company's troops whenever he should require them".² Clive omitted the stipulation about free trade and erection of factories in the Vizier's dominions which might give rise to constant troubles as they had done³ in Bihar. The agreement made with the Emperor was to the effect that he would receive Rs. 26,00,000 as his portion of the revenues of Bengal,

1. He was authorised to act with the Select Committee of four members quite independently of the Council. See below.

2. *Elphinstone p. 347.*

3. The English had a factory at Benares, "established" says Bolt, "by Vansittart towards the end of the year 1764 for the collection of the revenues of the zemindary of Benares (conferred upon the English by the Emperor's *farman* of the 29th December, 1764). It was likewise more advantageously situated", he adds "for extending and increasing the sales of broad cloth and other staple articles imported by the Company than any other they possessed" (*Bolt p. 51*). Sujahuddoulah complained of the conduct of its chief, Mr. Randolph Marriot, in interfering with the

Bihar and Orissa¹, the collection of which was to be made over to the Company who would thus become the Dewan of those provinces. The English should hand over to him the Districts of Allahabad and Korah in return for which the Emperor was required to confirm by a *farman* the Company's title to their possessions in different parts of India including Clive's own *Jaighir*, the reversion of which after 10 years' payment of revenue to Clive would belong to the Company. This *farman* of the Emperor was dated the 12th August, 1765.

We should now go back a little and follow the movements of Mir Casim from after the battle of Buxar.

We have seen how Mir Casim was thrown into prison and his property was plundered by Shujauddoulah. On the day before the battle, the Vizier set him free and provided him with a lame elephant to take him away and the scanty remnants of his effects from his camp. This the shrewd Nabob Vizier did with a view to serve two purposes ; to avoid the public scandal of surrendering his guest and ally to the enemy which he might have been thinking of in his mind and at the same time to be able to lay his hands upon him (the lame elephant could not carry him very far) in case he was forced to purchase his own safety by yielding him up. But Mir Casim had yet some valuable jewels hidden away¹ the whereabouts

affairs of Government. He was reprimanded by Clive on Oct. 29. (*Long. p. 420*). Clive had already written to the Court on Sept. 3, 1765, that the factory at Benares should be withdrawn immediately and it was withdrawn towards the end of the year (*Bolt p. 51*).

1. Orissa of the Treaty meant the districts of Midnapore, Cuttack and a few others. The whole province of Orissa did not come into the possession of the English till 1803.

1. These were the remnants of the jewels he had stolen from the inner apartments of the Murshidabad palace when it was being plundered after the Battle of Plassey.

of which his treacherous steward, Mir Suleiman, could not reveal to Shuja. With the help of these, after he had gone 10 or 12 miles beyond Benares, he managed to secure a fleetier conveyance and on hearing of the negotiations of Shuja with the English from his minister, Beni Bahadur, an old enemy of his, on the basis of his arrest and surrender, the fugitive prince "fled to Allahabad with a swiftness and a rapidity that could be compared to nothing but the wind or to the lightning."¹ And obtaining possession of his family who had been confined in the castle by the Vizier, marched on without stopping till he reached Bareilly, the principal city of the Rohillas, who received him with cordiality and accorded him shelter. But he could not stay there long. The reverses had so soured his temper and the desertions of his friends made him so cruel and suspicious that nobody could tolerate his presence long. The Rohillas soon wearied of his cavillings and unwarrantable suspicions and asked him to leave their country. He next went to the Rana of Gohud,² a petty Rajput chief, but there too, he could not remain long. The Rana desired him to leave his dominions on hearing that his guest had put to death some of his dependants who had been detected in an intrigue with his women and had these women whipped so severely that some of them threw themselves into a well preferring death to torture. After wandering about for some time in Rajputana he went to Delhi which also, on account of his intrigues against the minister, he was compelled to quit. His wanderings now came to an end; he died miserably in great poverty in 1777 at a small village

1. *Seir. II* 572.

2. The territory of Gohud lay on the Jumna 60 miles from Agra.

named Kotwal situated somewhere between Delhi and Agra.¹ His only shawl, it is said, had to be sold to meet his funeral expenses. For ten long years by his intrigues with the Nabob Vizier and the Emperor, the Rohilas, the Sikhs and the Marhattas he had kept the English in Bihar in a constant state of alarm.

So departed from the world a man who under more auspicious circumstances might have proved a good ruler, the restorer of peace and order to his kingdom that had suffered from feuds and dissensions for years. He was a timid,² nervous, ambitious yet an able and well-meaning man who was driven, by circumstances over which he hardly had any control, step by step into becoming a hateful tyrant and inhuman murderer. He had many good qualities.³ Though it was certainly an exaggeration to call him "an incomparable man," "an extraordinary prince of his age," it must be admitted that his love of justice was keen; his patience, forbearance and self-command astonished even Hastings. "Was I to suppose myself in the place of the Nabob" he said one occasion, "I should not be at a loss in what manner to protect my own subjects or servants from insults." It was a pity that he came into the world when times were out of joint and it was a spite of fate that he was meant to set a wrong world right. Like Hamlet he was devoid of the requisite qualifications for his mission and he failed miserably and failing involved the country in hideous ruin.

1. Buckland's *Dictionary*.

2. "Mir Casim able, vigilant, enterprising, in the cabinet was a coward by nature"—*Verelst* p. 48.

3. For a fair judgment of Mir Casim's character See *Vansittart III* p. 381

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE SECOND RULE OF MIR JAFFAR AND SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF CLIVE.

We have seen how, immediately after his restoration to the *musnud* of Murshidabad, Mir Jaffar had to accompany the English army sent in pursuit of his son-in-law. On the bank of the Karmanasa overtures were made to him by the Emperor and his Vizier and Mir Jaffar was not averse to the proposals they made. This was ascribed by the English to the influence of Nund Kumar who had become his Dewan and Chief Minister since his restoration. Nund Kumar had been imprisoned by the English for his suspected intrigues with the French but had been set free as Mir Jaffar had made it a special condition of his acceptance of the throne of Murshidabad. Major Carnac was reprimanded for having allowed this correspondence to be carried on between the Nabob and the Emperor and the Vizier without the knowledge of his guardians and, with a view to guard against such things happening in future, Mr. Stanlake Batson, was sent to keep near the Nabob as the Resident.

The affairs of Bihar naturally were in a state of confusion during this turmoil.

There was a revolution in Purneah. An adventurer of the name of Rohiuddin Hossain Khan, the son-in-law of Sayed Ahmed Khan, the Governor of Purneah in Aliverdi's time and a nephew and son-in-law of the Nabob, availed himself of the ruin that had overtaken Mir Casim to make his way into Purneah, the Governor of which Sher Ali Khan had gone with all his troops to

join Mir Casim. He seized the boats conveying to the Monghyr treasury Rupees 2 lacs and had himself declared the Nabob. He then sent a supplication to the English General at Patna and wrote to Mir Jaffar acknowledging him as his master and congratulating both him and the English on their successes over the enemy. Mir Jaffar pleased to see "so much revenue and strength deducted from the enemy's scale, and added to his own" sent him a *sanad* conferring the Governorship upon him. Rohiuddin remained in office till he was ousted by Mahomed Reza Khan, the Deputy Governor of Bengal, but was allowed a pension of Rs. 50,000 per annum "out of regard to his family connections." (*Minutes*, 25th Oct. 1765).

On the arrival of Major Munro at Patna an attempt was made to obtain possession of Rhotas from which Mir Casim had withdrawn his family and treasure leaving it in charge of Raja Shahu Mull. Mir Solieman, the treacherous steward of Mir Casim, persuaded Shuja-uddoulah to try and occupy the fort which he thought yet contained some treasure. He had himself sent to Sahu Mull for the purpose and opened negotiations with him. But more attractive offers were made by the English through Dr. Fullarton and the author of the *Seir* with which Shahu Mull closed at once and surrendered the Fort to Captain Goddard, when he marched up to it from Tikari.¹ Shahu Mull, availing himself of the protection of the English, seized upon Siris Cotumba and added it to his own zemindari of Chainpur and Sasseram and thought himself so powerful that he withheld the revenue. In December, 1764, Mir Jaffar complained to the Governor² that "if this were allowed he would not

1. *Seir* II p. 553.

2. *Long. p.* 363. Five lacs was the monthly allowance of which

be able to pay off his debts to the Company which amounted to one crore", nor his brother Mir Casim Khan whom he had made the Governor of Bihar with Dhirajnarain, the brother of Ramnarain, as his Deputy, "could furnish his share of the monthly allowance to the army of 2 lacs." He suggested that Shahu Mull must be made to pay that allowance. Shahu Mull like other refractory zemindars were soon brought under control by the Deputy Nabob, Reza Khan. Meanwhile the Council at Fort William were urgently demanding the presence of Mir Jaffar at Calcutta. The treasury of the Company was in a most exhausted state. Mir Jaffar had not been able to meet the pecuniary engagements of the treaty. In addition to the sums contracted in the treaty a promise had been extorted from him to pay 5 lacs for the expenses of the war so long as it would last.¹ Besides

2 lacs was to have been paid from Bihar and the remainder from Bengal. See below.

1. The 3 districts of Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong had been ceded to the English for meeting the expenses of the war and the Nabob had obtained the solemn pledges of the Council to his demands, the 5th item of which was :—

"Whenever I may demand any forces from the Governor and Council for my assistance let them be immediately sent to me and *no demand made on me for their expenses.*"

But afterwards Mir Jaffar had been forced to promise another 5 lacs per month.

The note of hand for 5 lacs a month dated 16th Sept. 1764 extorted from the Nabob was a glaring violation of the treaty. It was to the following effect :

"Account of money for the expenses of the Europeans and the Sepoys, the artillery, the raising of the cavalry, which shall be paid a month sooner or later according to the particulars under-mentioned from the beginning of the month of *Sophar* (31st July

these the payments to individuals, stipulated under the title of compensation for losses (Art. 10 of the Treaty) and fixed originally at about 10 lacs, had now swollen to 53 lacs. Mir Jaffar must do something "to put payments in train." Accordingly in July or August Mir Jaffar left for Calcutta and on his arrival there on 3rd September was forthwith visited by the Council pressing their demands for payment of his debts. He did all that a man situated like him could do. Nund Kumar paid the Company in December "the sum of 2 lacs, the balance of the 20 lacs payable on account of damages sustained by the merchants" (*Long p. 363*). But he had to struggle with tremendous difficulties. The country had been devastated by ruinous wars and the merchants impoverished, the zemindars were unruly and always in arrears and the treasury was drained dry. "In such circumstances it was to no purpose to harass the Nabob for large payments. The importunities to which he was subjected only hurried him to the grave." After languishing several days at Calcutta where he had gone from his capital on the 17th Nov. led by a false rumour that Clive, his *moorchasan*, "the light of his eyes," had returned to the country, he went back to Murshidabad to die on the 17th January 1765,¹ nominating the eldest son of his favourite wife, Munny Begum, his successor and bequeathing to

1764) of the 5th year of the reign till the removal of the troubles with the Vizier.

In the province of Bengal at Murshidabad	...	3,00,00
In the province of Bihar at Patna	...	2,00,000
Total Rupees		5,00,000.

1. This is the date given in *Musnud of Murshidabad*. Mill places the event in January, Beveridge in February. Bolt makes it take place on the 5th Feb.

Clive, by will a legacy of Rs. 5,00,000 which Clive, with other contributions converted into a trust fund "for the maintenance of European soldiers and officers, invalid or superannuated, and their widows."¹ "This nomination of a successor could have but little effect until an acknowledgement of him as Subadar was procured from the English"² Their choice lay between Nujumuddoulah, the son of Munny Begum, a youth about 20 years of age and the son of Miran, a child of about six. Clive who was on his way to India had planned to place the child of six on the throne of Murshidabad and carry on the work of Government by his native officers under the general control of the Company's servants. Thus the English would be the real rulers of Bengal though their sovereignty would be hidden from the public eye. But he was forestalled by Governor Spencer, a Bombay Civilian, who had come opportunely to Bengal to succeed Vansittart who had sailed for England just before the death of Mir Jaffar. The new Governor and his Council chose Nujumuddoulah for two reasons: they wanted to avoid the drudgery of attending to the minute details of administration during a long minority and they thought that a grown up Nabob managing his own affairs could give presents but an infant whose revenues must be accounted for to the Company could not.³ Accordingly four Commissioners, Messrs Johnstone, Leicester,

1. *Verelst's View* p. 50.

2. *Idem.* p. 50.

3. "It gives me infinite concern to inform you that Mr. Spencer (of whom I had the highest opinion) is by no means the man I took him to be, being deeper in the mire than the rest and who appears to me to have been seduced or led astray by Johnstone &c." *Clive's letter to Mr. Palk, Governor of Madras—Malcolm's Life.* II p. 374.

Middleton and Senior¹ went over to Murshidabad with the treaty which stipulated that the military defence of the country should be left entirely in the hands of the English, the Nabob keeping only such troops as would be necessary for the parade of government, and also the administration of justice and the business of collection ; that the civil administration of the country should be vested in a Deputy under the name of Naib Subah, chosen by the advice of the Governor and Council and removable only with their consent. The Nabob wanted to have Nund Kumar made the Deputy but the English would have none of him because of his unbounded avarice and his suspected intrigues with their enemies. Accordingly Mahomed Reza Khan, son-in-law to Ratia Begum, a daughter of Haji Ahmed, formerly Governor of Dacca was made Naib Subah (*Art. 2*). The other terms of the Treaty were the same as those of the Treaty concluded with Mir Jaffar in 1763, with its subsequent

4. John Johnstone, the son of Sir James Johnstone, was an assistant "just commenced" at the time of the capture of Calcutta (*Hill Vol. I p. 70*) ; was a factor on £15 in 1757 (*Long p. 102*). He made his escape to the French Factory and was saved. In 1761 he was at Midnapore and was besieged for 14 days by the Marhattas (*Long p. 264*). He was afterwards the chief at Burdwan and one of the vehement opponents of Vansittart. After his resignation he returned to England, had the decision of the Council reversed and brought about the impeachment of Clive.

Ascanius W. Senior arrived in India on the 25th July 1753, aged 25 ; was clerk to the Court of Requests in 1756 ; in the militia at the siege of Fulta ; a shipowner ; Import Warehouse Keeper in 1760 ; Chief of Cossimbazar in 1765.

Leycester "a man of uncommon timidity and great weakness of nerves" ; (*Clive*) had abandoned the Dacca factory, of which he was the Chief, on the appearance of a body of fakirs (*Bengal Past & Present Vol. v. p. 210*).

modifications. Besides the revenues of the *chucklas*, Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong, the new Nabob had to bind himself to pay to the English 5 lacs a month so long as the war lasted (*Art. 4*) and allow the Company's servants to carry on trade free of duties in all commodities except salt on which a duty of 2 per cent. only was to be charged (*Art. 5*).

Clive, as we have stated before, arrived at Calcutta on the 3rd May armed by the Court with extraordinary powers. He was the President, Governor and Commander-in-chief of Bengal. Together with four gentlemen nominated by the Directors, two of whom were his friends, Messrs, Sykes and Sumner, General Carnac and Mr. Verelst, he was to form a Select Committee, which was empowered to act independently of the Council.

He at once applied himself to what he called cleansing the "Augean Stable" of Bengal. An order had arrived at Calcutta from the India Office on the 24th January 1765,¹ seven days after the death of Mir Jaffar but about a month previous to the conclusion of the treaty with his successor, prohibiting by a new covenant to be signed by all the civil servants of the Company in India, the acceptance of presents of any kind from the natives of the country. This order was not placed on the records of the Council but it seems to have been communicated to the members. Still £230,000 had to be distributed in presents by the Nabob, Reza Khan, and Jagat Set, not only to the members of the Commission and Council but also to an outsider. The brother of Mr. Johnstone, the chief at Burdwan, received Rs. 50,000 though he was only a "free merchant."²

1. It was placed before the Council on the 25th. But there is no allusion to it in the proceedings,

2. *Third Report pp. 315, 432 and Malcolm's Clive. II p. 331.*

Clive had the covenant signed by the Councillors and afterwards by all the members of the Company's service. Towards the end of May, the Nabob came to Calcutta and on June, 1, presented a formal complaint of the insults and indignities to which he had been exposed and of the embezzlement of near 20 lacs of rupees issued from the treasury "for purposes unknown," during the late negotiations. Inquiries were set on foot at once about these complaints as also about the abuses and embezzlements by some of the Councillors. Two of them Mr. Johnstone, the Chief at Burdwan and Mr. Gray of Maldah, resigned. John Burdett of Balasore was suspended and Leycester was expelled. Billars, the chief at Patna, committed suicide and three other members were forced to resign. The number of members of the Council was reduced from 16 to 12 and the vacancies were filled up by 4 civilians brought over from Fort St. George. Clive had it further laid down as a rule by the Select Committee that a member of the Council should be that and nothing more; he should not be allowed to act as heretofore as agent in a subordinate factory and hold at the same time executive and supervising offices.

These reforms produced a storm of opposition, "a mutiny of the civil servants." They not only set their hands to a memorial of complaint signed by 91 members of the Company's service in India but also formed an association that vowed to boycott the President and the gentlemen called down from Madras.¹ All visits to the President were forbidden. All invitations from him and members of the Select Committee were slighted and the new members were treated with neglect and con-

1. *To the Court of Directors, dated 29th Jany. 1766.*

tempt.¹ But Clive remained unmoved and all opposition melted away before his firmness.

He next directed his attention to the abuse of private trade. The Court of Directors had in their letter dated the 8th February emphatically prohibited to the servants of the Company all inland trade. But so long as the pay of the Civil servants was kept miserably poor no step however drastic could eradicate the evil. "The hungry and necessitous" says Verelst "will ever commit depredations on property." Here, therefore, the difficulty Clive had to face was almost insuperable. He had not only to overcome the opposition of the Company's servants who had so long looked upon private trade as the only road to fortune but had also to persuade the Directors to act against their recent order prohibiting it. He restricted the privilege of issuing *Dustucks* only to the authorities named and defined by the Committee and suggested a scheme for making a monopoly of the three principal articles of inland trade, tobacco, betel and salt on behalf of the Company's servants, the profits arising from which should be appropriated for increasing their salaries. The scheme was adopted in anticipation of the Court's sanction and given effect to at once. The Directors, however, did not approve of it and wrote in their letter dated the 15th Feb. 1765, "In our letters of the 8th Feb. and 1st June last we gave our sentiments and directions very fully in respect of the inland trade of Bengal, we now enforce the same in the strongest manner and positively insist that you take no steps whatever towards renewing this trade without our express leave for which reason you must not fail to give us the fullest information upon the subject agreeable to our

1. *Letter from the President to Court, date 31st Jany. 1766—Verelst. Appendix p. 23.*

above mentioned directions." The plan however had already been set in operation and could not be discontinued till Sept. 1768.

The Governor put down oppression of the people by the servants of the Company, European or native, as also by the "free merchants." He strictly enforced the Company's order of Feb. 8, 1764, for recalling to the Presidency all free merchants and other Europeans who were not in the Company's service many of whom, by interfering in public affairs, by acts of oppression and violence, by assuming and exerting judicial authority, had totally perverted the ordinary course of justice and caused great interruption to the business of administration. The *gomastas* were withdrawn and business was carried on by and through the means of the Company's covenanted servants, resident at the several subordinate factories, as had been usual before 1753.

Simultaneously with the inauguration of these civil and commercial reforms he had to direct his attention to the retrenchment of the military expenses which absorbed the Company's revenues and made their ascendancy in the country a burden rather than an advantage. The frequent "presents" the officers and men had been receiving from the Nabobs had thoroughly demoralised the army and brought discipline to its lowest ebb. The soldiers, as we have seen, often mutinied and officers refused to carry out the commands of the Council. Their sole aim, like that of the civil servants, was to make their fortunes anyhow.

On the conclusion of the war with Shujauddoulah the English army was regimented and divided into three brigades one of which was posted at Monghyr, the second at Bankipore and the third at Allahabad. "As service in the field is in india attended with peculiar

charges the Company had, at an early period of their wars, found it necessary to allow their officers during the time of campaign a certain addition to their daily pay which in the language of the country was styled *batta* or indemnity for field expenses." Ever since the Battle of Plassey the Nabobs, with a view to winning the good will of the English officers and men, had doubled this allowance. So long as the troops were paid by the Nabobs, the Company did not object to the *double batta* but when territorial revenues were assigned for meeting the expenses, the Company found this *double batta* a drain upon their purse and they made repeated attempts to curtail it. The Select Committee now ordered that from Jany. 1, 1766, this *double batta* should cease and the officers in Bengal, with some exceptions in expensive stations, should be placed on the same footing as those on the Coromandel Coast, i. e., they should get single *batta* when in the field and in garrison or cantonment no *batta* at all."¹

There was, as was to be expected, a violent opposition. A numerous signed memorial was submitted to the Council who came to learn shortly after the receipt of the memorial that a deeply laid plot, in which all the brigades were implicated and towards the furtherance of which the civilians had subscribed £16,000, had been formed for forcing Clive to revoke his order. Their plan was to resign in a body on the 1st of June. It was a crisis worse than that Clive had to face at Calcutta when the civilians mutinied. But he faced it with unflinching firmness and struck his blows with lightning rapidity which had the effect of crushing the evil before it had time to grow and spread. He wrote to Madras urgent letters requesting that all officers who could possibly be

1. *Mill III p. 249.*

spared should be forthwith dispatched for Bengal. He wrote also to the Dutch Governor (Vernet) and the French Governor (Law) not to entertain the deserters in their service. The free merchants at Calcutta were also requested to accept commission temporarily or permanently, while all the officers who had resigned were ordered to be sent down to Calcutta to be court-martialled. The conspiracy collapsed; the officers at Monghyr submitted quietly to be sent down to Calcutta. Their Commander, Sir Robert Fletcher, was found guilty of having encouraged his officers in their mutiny. He was court-martialled and ejected from service but was soon re-instated through the intervention of the Court. Clive next went over to Bankipore on the 20th May. Sir Robert Barker was the Commander here. A part of the camp had been burnt down by fire suspected to have been the work of the disaffected soldiers. But on the arrival of Clive the officers who had resigned prayed to be allowed to retract their resignation. The brigade at Allahabad under Col. Smith proved more obstinate but they were intimidated by the arrival of a battalion of of Sepoys who had marched up from camp covering a distance of 104 miles in 54 hours. The mutiny was over. The Court of Directors interfering, the punishment dealt out was very lenient. No capital sentence was passed; officers cashiered, were reinstated; many were merely sentenced to imprisonment for short terms. These lenient punishments perhaps prevented the spirit of insubordination from being completely stamped out. It continued to smoulder in the army and broke out every now and then in acts of unruly violence and disobedience. The drastic measures Clive had to adopt for retrenching the military expenses and improving discipline were softened to a certain extent by the

establishment of what is known as "Clive's Fund."¹ To the legacy of 5 lacs bequeathed by Mir Jaffar to Clive his successor Nujumuddoulah had added 3 lacs. Clive made a free gift of these 8 lacs to the army by a formal deed executed on the 6th April, 1770. The amount was invested with the Company who agreed to pay an interest of 8 p. c. on it. This produced a yearly income of £9,912 and it was expended in pensions to invalid and superannuated soldiers and their widows.²

Shortly after the suppression of the mutinies Clive and Carnac proceeded to Chupra where a sort of congress was held for discussing the proposal of the Emperor and his Vizier "for an alliance between the Company, the Vizier and the Jat and Rohilla chiefs for their mutual defence and security against all attempts of the Marhattas to invade their several dominions."³ But Clive did not think that the Company would derive much benefit from such distant allies in case of an invasion of their own provinces. He was also averse to any scheme "for extending English conquest, assistance or possession" beyond the Karmanasa which the Court insisted on fixing as the limit of their power. It was for this reason that he had by the Treaty of Benares returned the Zemindary of Bulwant Singh and left Shujauddoulah in undisturbed possession of all his dominions. He, therefore, refused to enter into the alliance proposed but left "the management of such treaties as might be convenient for his own and the Company's welfare" to Shuja, only he was "not to conclude anything nor enter into any absolute agree-

1. "A generous soul" wrote a nameless military officer "to break their heads first and then give them a plaster."

2. *Beveridge's History I*, p. 703-4.

3. *Idem*.

ment without having previously acquainted the President with every proposal and obtained his approval." As Shuja had fulfilled all the conditions of the treaty the brigade under Colonel Smith was withdrawn¹ from his territories and posted at Sasseram to oppose the hostile intentions of the Marhattas whom Clive regarded as now the only formidable enemy in India. The Resident at Benares was withdrawn and every other European residing in the Vizier's dominions so that no disputes might arise from private commerce; Shuja was left to strengthen his kingdom which, Clive wished, should serve as a buffer state to the English possessions against the aggressions of the Jats and Rohillas and of the more formidable Marhattas, Sikhs and Afghans.

In the management of the affairs of Bengal Clive was able to give effect to the plan he had unfolded to Pitt in his letter dated the 7th Jan'y, 1759² though it seemed at first as if the decision of the Council to place Nujumuddoulah on the throne had put a serious obstacle in its way. But fortune favoured him; the grant of the Dewani which had been offered to Clive in 1759 and again to Carnac in 1761³ and refused by the President

1. It had to be sent back before long to help Shuja against the threatened hostilities of the Maharattas, Rohillas, Jats and Sikhs.

2. Clive proposed that a strong European force should be posted in Bengal and the English should assume the government of the Subah for which letters of confirmation might be easily obtained from Delhi.

Pitt concurred with Clive as regards the practicability of the scheme but as the conquests in India belonged to the Company and not to the Crown he refused to interfere.—*Wheeler's Early Records* pp. 267 and 270.

3. The offer was made on June 21, 1761 when the general was escorting Shah Alum to the borders of Bihar.

and Council, was now accepted, and it enabled him to carry out his intentions and make the Company the real sovereign of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Nabob was reduced to a mere cipher. The military power had already been taken away from his hands. It was the English who kept up such forces as might be necessary effectually to assist and support him in the defence of the provinces, the Nabob maintaining only such troops as were immediately necessary for the dignity of his person and government and the business of his collection which now came to be vested in the English. No officer could be appointed within the Subah and no important measure enforced without the approval of the President; even in the administration of justice and maintenance of order the Nabob's ministers had to consult the President's representative at the Durbar.

The grant of the Diwani to the Company led to certain changes in the administration of the Subah. A new agreement was made with Nabob Nujumuddoulah Sept. 30, 1765 by which the Nabob accepted a fixed allowance of Rs. 53,86,131 in support of the Nizamat¹ of Bengal. Reza Khan continued to be the Deputy Nizam. But Clive thought that too much power had been vested in his hands and so associated with him the banker Jagat Set Shroff and Dewan Durlavram and to preserve peace and concord among these colleagues decided to employ the vigilant control of a servant of the Company resident at Murshidabad. The Resident took over the monthly collections from the Nabob's officers which instead of being deposited in the public treasury as heretofore were now transmitted to Calcutta.

Administration of justice and maintenance of order and law in the country.

After paying 53 lacs and odd to the Nabob and 26 lacs¹ as revenue to the Emperor, the Company had a surplus of more than 3 million sterling out of which they provided for the defence of the country and the maintenance of the public peace. "The balance still left was so large that the Company appropriated it to the purchase of goods and manufactures in India and China."² On Jany. 31, 1766 the Select Committee were able to announce that they had set apart 24 lacs for China investments out of "the first fruits of the collections to the treasury."³ The first *Puneah* or collection ceremony was held agreeably to the custom of the country on the 29th April, 1766 at which Clive represented the Company as the Nabob's Dewan. The Zemindars and other public officers consented to pay to the amount of Rs. 5,20,000 as the first fruits of the collection; of this sum 4 lacs had already been received; the remainder, they expected, would be paid in a few days into the Treasury. Clive assured the members of the Committee that all possible despatch would be used for closing the balances of the present year so as to complete for the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa a collection of 140 lacs. The expectation was very nearly fulfilled. The total net revenue from Bengal including the collections from Calcutta and the 24 Perganas and of the ceded *chucklas* of Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong in one year from May, 1765 to April 1766 amounted to Rs. 136,05,088 and including

1. "The revenue from Bengal in Aurungzeb's time amounted to a million sterling. Poor Shah 'Alum was only too glad to get £3,000,000"—*Wheeler's Records* p. 2340.

2. *Verelst. Appendix* p. 16.

3. Clive's letter to General Carnac and Mr. Sykes—*Long* p. 435.

the net revenue from Bihar to Rs. 149,46,024.¹ The total charges in the same year including "buildings and fortifications amounted to Rs. 94,00,548." So that the net balance in favour of the Company amounted to nearly 56 lacs. In his letter to the Court dated the 30th September, 1765 Clive stated that the revenues of the provinces improving with time by better arrangements for their collection and by the curtailment of the allowance of the Nabob might rise to 270 or 280 lacs, an expectation that was never to be realised under the system he introduced.

Nawab Nujum-ud-doulah died on the 8th May, 1766 and was succeeded by his brother Seif-ud-doulah, a youth of sixteen, the general management of his affairs resting in the hands of Munny Begum who for her partiality for the Company came to be known by the name of the "mother of the Company." By a treaty concluded on the 19th May the terms of the previous treaties were confirmed with only one exception. The stipend of the Nabob was reduced from 53 lacs to 43 lacs. The Company played the daughter of Lear with the Nabob ; in 1770 it was still further reduced and fixed at 32 lacs, an agreement that "(by the blessing of God) shall be inviolably observed for ever." This "for ever" however, lasted only for 2 years, for in 1772 it was still further reduced and it became only 16 lacs.

No change was made in the administration which was carried on by Reza Khan, Jagat Set and Durlavram under the general control of the Resident.

Incessant hard work had worn out Clive ; his health failed ; he signified his intention to the Court to resign

1. *Verelst.* pp. 82, 83—Orissa was not mentioned as it had been ceded to the Marhattas and did not form a part of the dominions of the Nabob of Murshidabad.

and return to England. The mission entrusted to him having been successfully carried through, they gave their consent though reluctantly and Clive left for home on the 29th January 1767. Mr. Harry Verelst succeeded him on the 15th February.

"Clive's second return from Bengal was not, like his first, greeted by the acclamation of his countrymen." He had his old enemies in the India House headed by Mr. Lawrence Sullivan, who, though his power had suffered an eclipse¹ at the election of the 25th April, 1764, was yet strong enough to do him harm. Their ranks were now strengthened by the accession of those servants of the Company who had been ejected from service for their rapacity, corruption and insubordination and who had returned to England to wreak their vengeance upon him through the India House or Parliament. Sir Robert Fletcher who had been cashiered for having sympathised with and encouraged the mutiny at Monghyr wrote a pamphlet which lent support to the stories of Clive's rapacity with which his enemies had assiduously filled London. John Johnstone,² the

1. He was the Chairman of the Court of Directors when Clive returned from Bengal in 1760. He had tried to exclude Clive from a seat in the India House and from his Jaagir.

At the election of the 25th April one half of the candidates proposed by Sullivan were defeated and he himself was returned by a majority of one only. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman (Messrs. Rous & Bolton) were both supporters of Clive.

2. Son of Sir James Johnstone. Two of his brothers died in the Black Hole. The survivor then an "assistant" escaped to the French Factory and was saved (*Hill. Vol. I p. 107*). In 1757 he was a factor on £15 and one of the signatories to the petition to R. Drake for the establishment of Calcutta Militia (*Long p. 107*). In 1761 he was at Midnapore where he was besieged by the Marhattas for 14 days (*Long p. 264*). He was then taken into the

the Chief of Burdwan, who had accepted "presents" contrary to the express orders of the Court from Nabob Nujumuddollah and his officers, had taken an annual stipend of nearly Rs. 80,000 from the Raja of Burdwan in addition to the Company's salary and had left a balance of 6 lacs due from Burdwan to the Company's Treasury uncollected while he was busy filling his own pockets and who had not only taken money himself but had the shamelessness to force the Nabob to make a handsome *douceur* of Rs. 50,000 to his brother Gideon Johnstone, a free merchant and absolutely unconnected with the service, had resigned and come to England to carry on a campaign of implacable bitterness against the man who had deposed him from the position of a leader of the Opposition that had clogged and obstructed Vansittart and involved him in a disastrous and disgraceful war, the man who had cowed him down into silence at the very first meeting of the Council and unrelentingly exposed his malpractices. Proceedings had been instituted against him in the Court of Chancery for forcing him to disgorge his plunder. But Johnstone appealed to the Court of Proprietors against the decision of the Board of Directors between which two bodies there had been a quarrel on the question of dividends, the latter recommending 10 p. c., which the former would increase to 12½ p. c., and the proceedings instituted against him were dropped.

Circumstances, too, conspired against Clive. The "Nabobs" had become a most unpopular class of men and "Clive was eminently the Nabob, the ablest, the

Council and made the Chief at Burdwan. He joined the Opposition against Vansittart and soon made himself remarkable there for his vehement language and intemperate conduct. Macaulay calls him "one of the boldest and worst men in the assembly."

most celebrated, the highest in fortune of all the fraternity." The policy he had made the Council at Calcutta adopt soon proved impracticable. The "isolation of Bengal" was found impossible to maintain and the dual system of Government he had inaugurated with the Nabob as the Nizam and the Company, the Dewan, failed and brought on, it was thought, and not quite unreasonably, the terrible famine of 1770.

His enemies availed themselves of this unpopularity and now attacked him in Parliament which appointed a Committee by whom Clive was subjected to an ignoble and painful cross-examination. Nothing came of this inquiry as Parliament, admitting that his conduct had been culpable in certain respects, showed a wise reluctance to condemn on the ground that at the same time "Clive had rendered great and meritorious services to his country." Further proceedings against him were dropped. (1772).

But Clive did not live long to enjoy this dearly purchased rest. • Seven years after his return from Bengal he died by his own hands when he had just completed his 49th year. (1774).

CHAPTER XXXII.

BIHAR AFTER THE FALL OF MIR CASIM.

We have seen how the position of the Chief of the English Factory at Patna had changed since the battle of Plassey. He had become more a political agent than a mere supervisor of the Company's trade in the province, whom the Nabob found it necessary to consult in times of difficulty and danger and conciliate and keep in good humour if he wished to retain his office. He was associated with the Commander-in-chief¹ of the Bengal army in his dealings with the country potentates and his sympathy and support went a great way to decide the fate of the ruler of the province. Tables had been completely turned in course of the last ten years; it was no longer the chief who waited upon the Nabob and sought to win his favour by bribing his officers but the Nabob who humbly sued his protection.

The authority of the Chief was greatly enhanced when the military was placed entirely under his control.² Mr. Ellis demanded greater discretionary powers and usurped them even before they were sanctioned by "the majority in the Council" till he thought himself sufficiently empowered to make war on his own initiative.³ After the expulsion of Mir Casim and restoration of order in Bihar, the Chief became the

1. Major Coote to the Council dated 16th May 1761, and the Council's reply.

2. See *Ante*, Council order to Carnac. July 14, 1761, *Vans. Narrative I* p. 368.

3. *Vans. Narrative II* p. 254.

Resident at the Durbar of Azimabad and on the grant of the Dewani, the real Dewan, with native officers to assist him and work under his supervision.

His position became important for another reason. Bihar bordered on the territories of the Nabob Vizier of Oudh who holding the Emperor, an exile from Delhi, in his power and constantly intriguing with the Rohillas, the Jats and the Marhattas was a personage whose movements had to be carefully watched. Nundkumar, the late Dewan of Murshidabad whose fidelity the English strongly suspected carried on a correspondence with the Nabob Vizier through his emissaries Golab Rai and Mahatab Rai who had made their way to the Court of Shuja.¹ Mir Casim had not yet given up his intrigues with the Jats, Rohillas, Sikhs and Marhattas and was not without hopes of winning over Shujauddoulah to his cause. The conduct of Shujah "was often suspicious"² his correspondence had to be intercepted, boats laden with arms and stores had to be examined and stopped by an officer posted on the banks of the Dehva³ and the movements of his servants stationed in the *Sarai* at Patna had to be watched and reported on.⁴

1. Minutes of the Select Committee Nov. 1, 1770.

2. Letter to the Select Committee at Fort St. George 17, Feb. 1770 "commenting on the suspicious conduct of the king and Nabob Vazier."

3. Letter from the Chief at Patna to the Governor. 19th June, 1768. The boats were stoped by Ensign G. Wallen at his station near the confluence of the Dehva and the Ganges. The arms and stores were destroyed by fire that broke out at Patna in July 1767 and so could not be restored to the Nawab Vizier. See below.

4. Letter to the Chief at Patna 7th Novr. 1770 requesting information about the two servants of Nawab Shujuddoulah stationed in the *Sarai* at Patna. See below.

The Marhattas were another source of danger. The power of this nation, though slowly recovering from the effects of the fatal defeat at Panipat, was still formidable. Their dominions were bounded on the west by the country of the Rathore Rajputs ; and on the southwest, including the fertile province of Guzerat, extended to the Indian Ocean. Their eastern confines touched the extremity of Bihar and the Cuttack province bounded on that side by the Subarnarekha. On the North they were bounded by the Chambal, which rises in the central part of the Rathore mountains and discharges itself into the Jumna. People yet remembered the horrors of their depredations during the reign of Aliverdi which they had renewed since then by their occasional descents upon Balasore, Burdwan¹ and Midnapore.² After the Congress at Chuprah they had opened negotiations with the English which were continued till 1768 when the terms of a treaty by which Janoji agreed to cede Orissa on payment of the *chouth* were settled. But the treaty was not concluded. Their subsequent alliance with the Emperor made them yet more formidable. In September, 1766 Colonel Smith had been posted at Sasseram to procure and communicate to the Select Committee the authentic intelligence of the movements and intentions of the Marhattas and to take steps for the survey of the roads and passes in Bihar³ and Colonel Barker had been ordered to proceed

1. *Long p.* 239.

2. From Raja Tilak Chand Aug. 1760. "For 3 months the Marhattas remained here burning, plundering and laying waste the whole country." *Long p.* 233.

Long pp. 252, 258, 263—The factory at Balasore had been plundered and burnt. Johnstone at Midnapore had been besieged for 14 days.

3. *Letter to Col. Smith Sept. 53, 1766.*

with his whole brigade to the banks of the Karmanasa with instructions to cross the river in case the Marhattas invaded either the Emperor's or his Vizier's dominions.¹ The invasion scare continued for years afterwards till Orissa was annexed and the Marhatta power was broken.

The activities of the Jats, under Jawahir Singh, the growing power of the Rohillas and the Sikhs, "the Marhattas of the North"² and their frequent invasion of the Moghul territories and the fear of Afghan invasions were political factors which the English in spite of their intention to keep themselves isolated in Bengal and Bihar, could not afford to overlook. Bihar thus formed the watch-tower of the English and she now regained the importance she once had possessed in the days of Job Charnock.

The trade of Bihar had undergone much change during the nine bitter years of incessant warfare that had followed the battle of Plassey. The Company's trade had dwindled but private trade had grown and spread by leaps and bounds. The amount of advance required for investments at Patna for the year 1763 was estimated at only Rs. 3,50,000 though Mir Casim complained that nearly 400 new factories had been opened in different parts of the country in course of the last few years—³ 10 or 12 factories in each *parganah*, besides a large number of farms held by the English *Gomastas* in the

1. *Letter to Col. Barker 7th Oct. 1766.*

2. *Verelst p. 125.*

3. The total amount for Bengal and Bihar was only 40 lacs. In 1755 the amount supplied to the Aurungs of Bengal alone was Rs. 12,81,637/- —*Long p. 63.*

4. Nabob's letter dated 2nd May, 1762.

name of factories in both Bengal and Bihar.¹ Yet we have seen how the Company in 1765 was dangerously near bankruptcy.

Extensive trade was carried on by the Company's servants, free merchants and even their *gomastas* on their own account armed with *dustucks* which were expected to pass their goods duty-free. The Company had a monopoly in saltpetre. The chief commodities in which these interlopers traded were salt and opium.² We hear of boats laden with these commodities and armed with *dustucks*, though the property of the servants of the Company or private merchants, being stopped by the *foujdars* and *Chowkeydars*, imperiously ordered by the Chief of the factory or by the Governor himself to be set free at once. Ellis complained to the Governor of the Nabob's servant "Munseram having stopped some opium belonging to Mr. Hay notwithstanding there was a *Dustuck*." The Governor wrote to the *Foujdar* of Rajmahal³ ordering him to set free at once the boats he had detained, boats belonging to Messrs. Lushington and Amphlett of Patna and laden with salt and provided with the "*Bakshbunder*⁴ pass and the Governor's *Dustuck*." Betelnut and perhaps tobacco also occasionally figured in these affairs. The Governor complained to the Nabob that the aforesaid *foujdar* of

1. Paper of Requests submitted by the Nabob to the Council on 14th Sept. 1762—*Long p. 356*.

2. In their letter dated the 12th August, 1766 the Governor informed the Chief and Council at Patna that the trade in opium may be declared free to the public and put under the management of Government.

3. *To Kutub Alum from Governor—Feb. 10th 1763—Long p. 345*.

4. *Hugli*.

Rajmahal¹ had also stopped 4 boats laden with betelnut, which had a *dustuck* from the Chief of Dacca factory and made a demand of duties. Raw silk and white piecegoods still continued to be made as heretofore² but trade in raw cotton had suffered by the imposition "on the borders of the Bihar province a new and extraordinary duty above 30 p. c., on cotton brought down from the high country."³ The commodities imported into the province were chiefly broadcloth, copper, tin, iron and cordage.⁴

The Company had recently evinced an interest in a new commodity. The chief at Patna had been asked to make inquiries as to the possibility of bringing firs from the Bettiah country. The expedition of Mir Casim enabled the Chief to make these inquiries and he reported in his letter dated the 21st October "that there were no firs to be had in the Bettiah country of any size but they grew in the mountains near Nepal and might be had for cutting but they would by no means be adequate to the expense, the undertaking being very dangerous."⁵ In 1766, however, Sir Robert Barker, sent to demolish the forts and reduce to obedience some of the turbulent zemindars of Bettiah deeply in arrears for the revenue, reported that Bettiah would be of considerable consequence to the Company. "Its firs would afford masts for all ships in India which must produce a new and considerable trade with the other

1. Governor to the Nabob, Feb. 12, 1763,—*Long p. 345.*

2. *Seir III p. 32.*

3. *Bolt's Considerations* p. 196. This was done with a view to enable the Company and their servants to command high prices for the cotton they imported from Bombay and Surat.

4. Letter to Court. Feb. 27, 1758—*Long p. 119.*

5. Court letter. Dec. 30, 1763—*Long 291.*

nations in India as well as advantage to our own shipping. Gold and Cinnamon are also here (the latter we gather in the jungles). Timbers as large as any I have seen; musk and elephant teeth, besides many other commodities I have not yet got any knowledge of."¹ The Chief and Council at Patna did not put much faith in the soldier's report so they sent an extract from his letter "rather as an article of curious intelligence than a prospect of advantage to the Company."² The Council however, were of a different opinion. They ordered the Chief at Patna on 3rd March, 1767 to procure fir timbers for the Company and endeavour to get tar and turpentine out of them. On the 17th of August the Chief of Patna replied that he had been advised by the Resident at Bettiah, Mr. Golding, of 27 fir timbers of different dimensions dispatched by way of the great river that falls into the Ganges by Monghyr,³ the largest of which measured from 60 to 70 ft., in length. The expense on these few could not be ascertained as several charges attending the first undertaking would not be found necessary in future. The timbers provided in different parts of the hills, he added, would shortly come down to Patna by the Gunduck from whence he would forward them to Calcutta. The Council wrote to the Court that if after careful inspection they found the timbers serviceable and of a good quality they would prosecute business with all the frugality it would admit of. They purchased also some procured for them by Mr. Richard Barwell, the Resident at Maldah, from the

1. Letter from the Camp at Rampore, March 5, 1766—*Long p. 464.*

2. Letter to the Council March 25, 1766—*Long p. 465.*

3. The little Gunduck which meeting Bagmutty and Kamala on the way flows into the Ganges near Monghyr.

Morung country¹ at the rate of 30 Arcot Rupees² each, and despatched samples of these to England. It was this desire to procure timbers that must have chiefly influenced the Select Committee to send the expedition under Captain Kinloch in 1769 to Nepal where "they were to be had for cutting." The expedition failed; a second expedition was planned but had to be abandoned owing to the demand for re-inforcements in men and money from Madras. The country conquered did not prove very profitable but a trade with Nepal was opened by the conclusion of a treaty with the victorious Gurcooly (Gurkha) Raja. It did not flourish, however, as the military despotism of the Gurkhas was not favourable to trade.

In Bengal timber trade had been flourishing. Hastings had a timber trade in Bakurganj and had two agents Captain Rose or Ross and Mr. Kelley posted there.³ Timber was not only required for exportation but also for building *budgerows* or boats for river-navigation as well as sea-going ships. Ship-building at Calcutta⁴ was

1. *Long p. 489.*

2. Arcot rupees (good) contained 3 dwt.—6 grains of silver Calcutta sicca rupees contained 13 dwt.—6—2 dms. silver and Patna (*sonat*) rupees contained 13 cwt.—22—0—*Long p. 382.*

3. *Long. p. 319.*

4. Surat, Bombay, Damaun and Pegu were other places in the Indian Empire that were famous for ship-building.

Between 1781 and 1800 thirty-five vessels averaging 17,020 tons were built in Calcutta; and from 1781 to 1821 the number built was 237.

The construction of ships was not confined to Calcutta; at Fort Gloster between 1811 and 1828, twenty-seven vessels measuring 9322 tons were built and as early as 1800 a vessel of

especially connected with the name of Colonel Henry Watson, the Government Engineer, to whom belongs the honour of establishing the first dockyards in Bengal at a place then known as Surman's Garden. The docks were afterwards purchased by James Kyd, an East Indian gentleman, after whom the place came to be called Kidderpore. Ship-building became particularly brisk after 1770 and ships built with native labour and teakwood excited the jealousy of the ship-builders in London connected with the Leadenhall Street.¹ They insinuated that it was unpatriotic to employ native labour and suggested that ships should always be built of oak. It was this jealousy that killed the trade in the last quarter of the 19th Century not, as Mr. Carey, suggests "our inability to construct vessels of such superior architecture or with such superior economy as to compete with those which are constructed in England."²

1450 tons, the *Countess of Southerland*, was built at Tittaghar near Barrackpore—*Carey's Good Old Days*. II p. 116.

1. Long's *Calcutta and Its People* in the *Calcutta Review* Vol. xxxv p. 192.

2. *Carey's Good Old Days of John Company* Vol. II pp. 114 etseq.

This opinion is controverted by the fact that at Dumaun ship-building is still a flourishing business. At Bombay according to the testimony borne by an Englishman "the art of ship-building had attained under the conduct of the natives alone a degree of perfection which enabled it to bear a fair comparison with the same art in England." The great ship-builders were the Jamsetjees. The first frigate built of teak for His Majesty's Service was launched in 1800.

A curious anecdote is told in this connection illustrative of the contemptuous treatment Englishmen even in those days used to

What was the result of the endeavour to extract tar and turpentine from fir we do not know, but timber trade flourished.

A great change was wrought upon the trade of the Company also by the order of the Court of Feb. 8, 1764 that "no *Gomastas* or agents should be allowed to reside, on account of private trade, at any inland parts of the country; all business, on account of licensed private trade was to be carried on by and through the means of the Company's covenanted servants, resident at the several subordinate factories, as had been usual before the year 1753." On the 3rd May the Calcutta Board resolved that Europeans, Natives and Armenian agents who were then up the country should have notice given them to settle their concerns so as to return to Calcutta by the 21st Nov., next.¹ All Englishmen who were not in the Company's service were served with a similar notice and it was resolved to call down to the Presidency all Europeans excepting those belonging to the Factories at Patna, Dacca, Cassimbazaar and Chittagong. Maldah and other factories were closed.² The Benares factory was withdrawn and all Europeans carrying on private trade were ordered peremptorily, on a representation from Shujauddoulah, to leave the Nabob Vizier's dominions but their native agents were allowed two months' time for adjusting the affairs

accord to the Indians. Jamsetjee elated with the admiration his handi-work excited commemorated the event by causing these words to be carved on the inside of the kelson: "This ship was built by a d—d black fellow. A. D. 1800."

1. *Verelst Appendix* p. 179.

2. Letter to R. Barwell Resident at Maldah, 10th Sep. 1766.

3. Letter from Col. R. Smith to the Select Committee 3rd Jan. 1768.

of their constituents.¹ The free merchants however did not yield to the order without a fight and they evaded it on various pretexts for a long time. In Patna alone there were eight free merchants² in 1765. One of them, Mr. Scotney,³ represented to the Committee that it would prejudice his own affairs as well as those of his constituents should he be obliged to return to Calcutta within the space of one month. The Committee allowed him 4 months' grace though they strongly objected to the disrespectful and immoderate tone of his letter. The notorious Mr. Bolts continued in Benares and carried on his trade operations till his *Gomastas* were seized and imprisoned by Shitab Rai in April, 1768 and he himself arrested and deported to England.

The effect of these orders was to restrict the trade which had already suffered from the devastations of war. The Company also now began to think more of the collection of revenues and political affairs of the country than of investments but their servants in spite of the prohibition carried on private trade on as large a scale as before and forcibly retained a monopoly of salt, tobacco and betelnut for a long time after it had been strictly forbidden by the Court's order. This political ascendancy of the English not only restricted their own trade but also that of the trading companies of other nations and almost killed the native trade. The

1. Letter from the Select Committee to the Chief at Patna 27-4-1768.

2. *Long p. 413.*

3. Probably Bryan Scotney who was one of the executors of Major Knox's Will. See *Randfurie Knox* by S. C. Hill in the *B. and O. R. S. Journal Vol. II p. 112, p. 132.*

Dutch and the French¹ fought shy of laying out their capitals in businesses that might rouse the jealousy of the English which, if they chose, they might now vent in a manner seriously detrimental to the interests of their rivals. The French trade in Bihar since 1763 had been dwindling. "It consisted of two articles salt-petre and coarse calico cloths." Their saltpetre, reported Sumner,² they have received regularly from the English agents. Their portion of it was annually 1800, mds. of 76 Sicca weight but sometimes the Public French Agent had not

1. In Maldah from 1763 to 1765 no business was carried on by the French.

2. Letter from Mr. Sumner, Chief at Patna to the President and members of the Board of Trade 6th July, 1784 in reply to their circular asking for an account of the French trade in Bihar since 1763 writes :—

"It consisted of two articles, saltpetre and coarse calico-cloths. Their saltpetre they have received regularly from the Agents of the English East India Company. Their portion of it was annually 18000 Mds. of 76 sicca weight but sometime the public French Agents have not applied for so much and in 1777-78 they received each year only about half that quantity. The price they paid us for the quantity delivered was fixed at Rupees 3-8 per md.

The French appears to have only claimed and exercised that part of the regular trade in coarse calicoes called *Dadney* to a very limited extent in point of place and amount of their investment. It was confined to Sahabad where so many weavers reside as to make up 6000 pieces of *Gurrah* cloths in a year. I do not find they made advance of money to the weavers in any other part of the Bihar district. If the French invoices have been to a greater amount than this they must have been made up by ready money purchases which are valued by custom so that the English claimed the right of employing $\frac{2}{3}$ of the weavers, the Dutch $\frac{1}{3}$ rd. The French could employ only such as were rejected by them. Compare also Court Letter Dec. 30, 1763. "By what

applied, for so much and in 1777 and 1778 they received each year only half that quantity..... Their *dadney* trade in calico cloth was confined only to the Sahabad District where so many weavers reside as to make up 6000 pieces of *gurrah* cloth in a year. If the French invoices had been to a greater amount than this they must have been made up by ready-money purchases which were ruled by custom so that the English claimed the right of employing two-thirds of the weavers and the Dutch one-third. The French could employ only such as were rejected by them."

The position of the Dutch though slightly better than that of the French was anything but comfortable. The changes in the European politics kept them in a state of constant alarm till war was declared against Holland in Europe and the Governor-General received orders to seize their factories and expel them from the country (1781).¹

One result of these restrictions upon the trade and manufactures of the country was to make the imports of Bengal exceed her exports and to make "the balance of

can be collected from public and private intelligence with respect to the French E. I. Coy., it appears to be in a very low and languishing condition, unable to carry on trade and imagined to be in the point of being dissolved.

Very few ships can proceed from France to the East Indies this session and it will probably be long before the French trade and power can make a figure again in India." *Long* p. 293.

1. On 14th June 1767 the Dutch factors of Hugli complained : "In Bengal the workmen by your servants are obliged against their will and thanks to take money and to bind themselves not to work for any body else but for the English." This according to Bolts was only one of the many complaints made by the Dutch and the French.

trade" dead against her. "The various restrictions that hampered her commerce prevented free operation of the economic tendency of the exports paying for the imports." There was a drain of money out of the country (Province).¹ It was helped by other causes like the sending out of money for investments in China amounting on an average to 2 lacs a year, the tribute paid to the Emperor, the salary of brigades posted outside the province but paid out of its exchequer and it led to such a scarcity of specie in 1768 that "the settlement was reduced to a state of bankruptcy."² "Trade" is totally put a stop"; wrote the Select Committee to the Court "and even the most reputable of your servants can with difficulty procure silver sufficient for the payment of their servants' wages." In Bihar matters were as bad. "A rupee or Asrafi in most hands has become as scarce as the philosopher's stone, and it could come to pass that most of the people newly born would be at a loss to determine what it was which people called heretofore a Rupée and what was meant by an Ashrafi."

1. According to Verelst's calculations the drain of money out of the country in the 3 years from 1766 amounted to Rs. 50,550,000. *Verelst's View* p. 117.

Mill considers "this drain" to be an absurd plea put forward to justify the Committee's destroying the resources of the country and says that there could have been no "drain" as at the time the prices had risen.

This is, however, contradicted by the statement of Golam Hossain that "things were cheap."—*Seir*. III p. 32.

In those days of imperfect system of communication each province was like "a water-tight compartment." Money sent out of a province could not easily return to it. This difficulty was emphasised by the fact that different kinds of coins were in circulation in different parts of the country.

2. Select Committee to the Court 21 st Nov. 1768—*Verelst* p. 86.

This scarcity of specie was followed by a terrible drought that brought on a famine in 1770 exceeding in intensity all the famines of the preceding ages. It swept away in some places one half and on the whole one third of the population of the country. "It was rumoured that the Company's servants had created the famine by engrossing all the rice in the grain and that they had sold the grain for eight, ten, twelve times the price at which they had bought it."¹ When we remember the way the Company's servants carried on trade, how anxious they were to make their fortunes and how unscrupulous they were as regards the means they employed to make them, we would not be surprisid if there were a certain foundation of truth for these rumours. Mr. Becher and Mahomed Reza Khan in their letters to the Committee accused the *Gomastas* of English gentlemen "not barely for monopolising grain but for compelling the poor ryots to sell even the seed requisite for the next harvest," The Court believed the charge and found fault with the Committee for not making the necessary inquiries. "As part of the charge sets forth"² they shrewdly remarked "that the ryots were compelled to sell their rice to these monopolising Europeans we have reason to suspect that they could be no other than persons of some rank in our service ; otherwise we apprehend they would not have presumed on having influence sufficient to prevent an inquiry into their proceedings."

But it was not merely the "engrossing of grain" by the *gomastas* of the Europeans nor this drought that

1. Macaulay's *Essay on Clive*.

2. Court Letter to the Committee quoted in Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal*—p. 399.

was wholly responsible for the dreadful famine. It was the utter exhaustion of the country. For nearly 20 years she had had no respite. The devastation of the Marhattas was followed by the exactions of the Nabobs, equally disastrous to the country whether they were systematic and indiscriminate as those of Aliverdi Khan and Mir Casim or desultory and fitful as those of Mir Jaffar. Then there were incessant wars going on; armies marching up and down the country, leaving roofless houses, trampled corn-fields and empty villages in their train. War and disease had worked havoc upon the population; fields lay uncultivated and those that were cultivated, were hastily and hurriedly tilled, the cultivator labouring under constant apprehension of being robbed of the fruits of his labour; and they gave a poor out-turn. There was a paucity of corn, coin, cattle and men.¹ The glowing picture that Clive had drawn of the prosperous future of the country and of the profits of the Company proved a veritable chimera. The system inaugurated by him by which the Company monopolised the wealth and resources of the country without taking upon themselves the responsibility of looking after the welfare of the people proved a failure. It brought no relief to the country which continued to be as heavily oppressed and as thoroughly impoverished under the new Dewans as under the old Nabobs. War too had not ceased. There was peace in Bengal but hostilities

1. In addition to these calamities there was a terrible hurricane that devastated Calcutta in Feb. 1770 [*Elliot, VIII p. 228*] "where 4 mds. of grain had been sold to the rupee even 4 seer were not to be obtained for the same money"—Hari Ch. Das's *Chahar Gulzar Shujai*.—*Elliot VII*.

had broken out in southern India and considerable supplies of men and money were demanded from Bengal. The Madras and Bengal exchequers were completely empty. The Proprietors who had been looking forward to and demanding heavy dividends and on the prospect of high profits had agreed to pay to the Crown £400,000 per annum, found themselves faced with heavy debts in the place of dividends.¹ Their debts in 1758 amounted to £4,200,000. They were now swollen by their servants in India spending the deposits left with them by the Company's servants and others leaving for Europe and making the Directors at home responsible for the payment of the Bills. By 1770 the Company was virtually bankrupt. This led to a sifting inquiry by Government of the Company's affairs and the impeachment of Clive to which reference has been made to before. The Company was released from the annual payment of £400,000 and had £1,500,000 as loan for 4 years on condition that the dividend allowed should not exceed 6 p. c. At the same time the Regulating Act of Lord North definitely established Parliamentary control over the affairs of the Company. But these are matters that lie beyond the scope of our story.

1. The Court of Proprietors demanded a dividend of $12\frac{1}{2}$ p. c. the Court of Directors were willing to allow only 6. The quarrel attracted public notice. A Committee of Parliament was formed and an Act was passed that directed that from after 24th June 1767 dividends should be voted only by ballots in General Courts and that no dividend above 10 p. c., for the year should be made before the next Session of Parliament. By another Act the Company was allowed to hold territorial revenues for two years on payment of £400,000 into the public exchequer. The agreement was renewed in 1769 for 5 years.

In 1769 the Crown and the Company could devise no other plan to meet the financial embarrassments than the futile one of sending to India three Commissioners who under the name of Supervisors should have full power over all the other servants of the Company in India. The Commissioners were Henry Vansittart, Luke Scrafton and Colonel Forde. They sailed in the autumn of 1769 in the *Aurora* frigate which reached the Cape in safety but was never heard of after she had left Simon's Bay.

The grant of Diwani brought about another change in the Government at Calcutta. The two-fold character of the work, political and commercial, necessitated a division of duties. Accordingly on 21st Dec. 1765 the Select Committee decided to draw "a line whereby their distinct and respective provinces were marked out." The Council were entrusted with the management of the commercial affairs; the Select Committee reserved for themselves the political powers; the factories were managed by the former, the Diwani by the latter.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE RULERS OF BIHAR AFTER THE FALL OF MIR CASIM.

Mir Jaffar, as we have seen, before he left for Calcutta in July or August 1764 had appointed his brother Mir Casim Khan, the Governor of Bihar and Dhirajnarain, the brother of Raja Ramnarain, his Deputy. It was not a happy choice. Mir Casim was "a man of much goodness of heart and great simplicity of manners but of little capacity or knowledge." Dhirajnarain though not so absolutely worthless as Golam Hossain in his Mahomedan antipathy would make him out¹ did not possess the abilities of his brother. After the deposition of Mir Jaffar, Mir Casim Khan had lived at Rajmahal. He had been found by Major Coote "starving with a large family." Coote urged Mir Casim to do something for him and a pension of Rs. 1000/- a month was ordered but not a single rupee was ever paid. His elevation to office was only for a short time. Clive on his way to Benares to conclude the Treaty with Nabob Vizier made a short stay at Patna and met Mir Casim Khan whom he thought "simple and plain and unfit for so weighty an office as the Government of Bihar." Accordingly on his way back from Benares he caused Mir Casim Khan to retire on a pension of one lac a year.² He took

1. "A man unfit for so cumbersome and so intricate a charge, and indeed unfit for anything at all."

1. So *Seir*. The minutes of the Select Committee of the 25th July, 1765 say "To him we likewise consent to allow Rs. 6000 per mensem to support him in case and show our respect for the memory of his brother the late Nabob Meer Jaffir."

up his residence again at Rajmahal where he passed the rest of his days.¹ Dhirajnarain, the Deputy remained in charge of the Government till the grant of the Diwani changed the mode of administration. The office of the Nabob was abolished. Dhirajnarain was kept on as the Deputy Dewan and associated with Raja Shitab Roy whom Clive sent up on his arrival at Calcutta, as the Dewan.

When Patna was recovered and occupied by the British troops, William Billers² was appointed Chief of the factory in succession to Ellis. The godowns had been burnt and the factory buildings badly damaged when the city had been recaptured by the Nabob's troops under Mehdi Khan, the Governor, and general Mercar. So the Chief was compelled to put up with the English troops encamped at Bankipore.³ Billers wished to imitate his colleagues at Calcutta and play on a small scale the role of "the King-maker." So immediately after the appointment of Mir Casem Khan as the Nabob of Patna, he traversed the city in great pomp and

1. He died in 1781. *Seir*, Vol. III. p. 11.

2. Billers had been the Chief of Luckeypore and then of Jugdea. He was one of the members of the Council summoned from the inland station to discuss the question of private trade by the Company's servants. It was he who proposed the name of Mir Jaffar when the Council having decided to depose Mir Casim called upon the members to nominate an influential man to take his place.

3. "Chalissatoon and near 40 houses designed for the reception of strangers but forcibly taken possession of several English gentlemen" as complained of by Mir Casim evidently had been rendered unfit for occupation by the capture and re-capture of the city several times in course of the last few months—*Long* p. 357 Ellis had destroyed the houses near the Fort. See above.

proceeded to the castle where he ordered the new Nabob to take his seat on the *Musnud*. The installation brought him a sum of money. Not content with this Billers began raising money in other questionable ways. But when he heard of the arrival of Clive and of the severity with which he was treating those who had been found guilty of malpractices like his, he was seized with consternation and he committed suicide by throwing himself on his sword. He was buried in the garden at Bankipore (June or July 1765).¹

Billers was succeeded by Samuel Middleton who was one of the Commissioners who went to Murshidabad to instal Nuzumuddoulah and as such had received a "present" of Rs. 1,22,500. Full restitution was demanded of him but "in consideration of his reputation for strict honour and integrity in the Company's service" and the fact that he was entirely ignorant at the time of the Company's order against the acceptance of presents, the Select Committee recommended his case to the lenient consideration of the Court and requested them "to drop a prosecution that must be attended with ruin to his fortune and family,"² So that he underwent only a temporary dismissal in 1767 being re-admitted to the service shortly after and promoted.

On his arrival at Patna he was directed on the 5th October, 1765 to see that the gentlemen of the factory did not interfere with the affairs of Government or lend money to the Zemindars and to send back to Calcutta all free merchants and other Europeans on or before the 21st of November. This order could not be given effect to at once and the Select Committee was com-

1. *Seir* p. 7.

2. Proceedings of the Select Committee. 5th Oct. 1765.

pelled to allow the merchants and their agents time to close their business and collect their effects.

After the congress at Chuprah there was some apprehension of a Marhatta invasion. Middleton was empowered to employ troops for the defence of the factory.¹ Col. Smith was posted at Sasseram to watch the movements of the Ma-hattas and was asked to prepare a statement of the means to be adopted for surveying the roads and passes in Bihar.² Col. Sir Robert Barker was sent to the bank of the Karmanasa with instructions to cross the river if the Marhattas invaded the territories of the Vizier or the Emperor or if Mir Casim, who was in Bundelkhund with a large army, entered Shujah's dominions.³ Shortly after this there were the mutinies of the brigades at Munghyr and Bankipore which, were nipped in the bud by the prompt and firm action of Clive. Altogether it was an exciting time in Bihar when Middleton was the Chief at Patna.

After the grant of the Diwani the Chief at Patna was appointed (20th Dec. 1765) supervisor of the collection of Revenue in Bihar and he was associated in this work with Shitab Roy,⁴ the Dewan and Dhirajnarin his assistant. The *Killa* which the Select Committee had

1. Proceedings of the Select Committee 23rd Sept. 1766.

2. Idem—7th Oct. 1766.

3. Sir Robert Barker's letter of 26th Oct. 1766.

4. This Shitab Roy was one of the most prominent figures of the time. He was by caste a Kshatriya (and not a Kayastha as O'Malley in his *Provincial Geography of Bengal etc.*, p. 270 and Buckland in his *Dictionary* p. 1765 say). He was brought up in the family of the son of the Khan Douran to Mahomed Shah and began life as a servant of Aga Suleiman, the steward to the family. On the death of that noble man and the outbreak of disturbances at Delhi he was appointed Imperial Diwan

wanted to convert into the factory and to that end had ordered the Nabob to vacate it (27th Oct. 1765) was transformed into the Diwan's office and the Supervisor was required to attend it at the appointed time and transact business, revenue and judicial, with his colleagues. The Supervisor was under the immediate control of the Resident at the Durbur to whom he had to submit his monthly collections and accounts. The Select Committee in their letter dated the 24th Oct. 1767, reported this arrangement to the Court and wrote "that the annual collection would answer their most sanguine expectations." But the zemindars were in arrears and unruly. Troops had to be sent against some,

of Bihar, Governor of Rhotas and Manager of the Jaagir of Aga Soleiman's son, Sitabdin, in the districts of Ponch and Malda. He won the good graces of Clive and through his support got Ramnarain to honour all these three patents and lived in great state at Murshidabad till he came to Bihar to fight against the Shahzada. He showed remarkable bravery in battle and great wisdom in council. After the fight with the Nabob of Purneah at Hajipore Captain Knox said "Here is the real Nabob. I have never seen such a Nabob as this."

The jealousy of Mir Casim drove him from Bihar. He took service with the Nabob Vizier and rose high in his favour and obtained a freehold Jaagir of a lac of Rupees. In the negotiations with the Emperor and the Vizier he was of very great help to Clive and he came at his invitation to Calcutta.

Under Hastings he was suspected of embezzlement arrested and imprisoned but acquitted. He died shortly after and his office was bestowed on the elder of his two sons, Kalyan Singh, whose diaries have been published in *B. & O. R. Society's Journal*.

Shitab Ray introduced the cultivation of musk and water melons and grapes into Bihar. "The descendant of Shitab Ray rank as the premier nobleman of Bihar though he has hardly one bigha of land in his possession"—*Beveridge in the Calcutta Review*, Vol. LXXVI. p. 231.

others had to be arrested and confined before the arrears were realised. The Governor wrote to Jugal Kishor, zemindar of Bettiah on 24th July, 1765 : "In Mir Casim's time you used to pay into the treasury 6 or 7 lacs of rupees out of the revenues of your zemindary and now you pay nothing but a few timbers. I, therefore, write to you that you must send without delay the balance (of the revenue) and give security for the regular payment of your revenues in future. If (which God forbid) you neglect this advice an English army will march against you after the rains and settle your business" (Long p. 411). The advice was not listened to and on the 20th December Sir Robert Barker was directed to lose no time in reducing the rebellious zemindars, one of whom was the zemindar of Bettiah. Sir Robert reached Bettiah in January or February, 1766, demolished the forts and made the zemindars give definite undertaking for the payment of arrears. The expedition, as we have seen, produced an important result, viz., it drew the attention of the Company to the possibility of a great trade in fir and timber and tar and turpentine that might be extracted from the former and the desirability of establishing a permanent trade relation with Nepal which led to Captain Kinloch's unsuccessful expedition into that country. (1767)

The old arrangement for the collection of revenue by native officers, called *Aumils*, was kept up with the effect that corruption and oppression continued as rife as before. They became, perhaps, worse because of the desire of the Collectors to make the collection as large as possible with a view to win the good graces of their masters and at the same time to make their own fortunes. So profitable a business was the collection of

revenue that Sir Robert Barker, the Commander of the Bankipore brigade, prayed to be associated with the Chief at Patna in the work, a prayer that Clive would not listen to.¹

The collection of the year 1766-67 was the largest in the 5 years from 1765 to 1770, amounting to gross receipts of Rs. 78,68,020/-; charges for collection, stipends, Jaghirs etc., being only 19,28,628/-, the nett receipts amounted to nearly 60 lacs. The expenses in Bihar had always been very heavy. Sykes, the Resident at the Durbar, after a careful inspection of every article with the help of Mahomed Reza Khan had reduced the expenses from Rs. 2,15,3904-2-10p. in Raja Ramnarain and his successor's time to only Rs. 7,50,920. They were still great and heavy."² Successful efforts were also made in the following years to bring down the expenses and we find that the charges in 1767-68 and the following two years amounted to about 8 lacs, 7½ lacs and 8½ lacs respectively.³ Rupees 12 lacs had been allotted by the Select Committee as allowances for the three officers Mahomed Reza Khan, Raja Durlavram and Raja Shitab Roy. But in consideration of the abilities of Reza Khan, the dignity of his position as second only to the Nabob and the pecuniary sacrifices

1. One of the perquisites of the supervisor is thus described by Bolts : "In the Bihar province when the zemindar has not been able to pay up in time, the Dewan takes upon himself the responsibility and gives the Resident a receipt called *Puat* for the amount as paid into the treasury. For this service he demands from the zemindar an allowance called *Paateran* of 10 p. c., upon the sum due from the zemindar."

2. Syke's letter dated 31st October, 1765.

Bolts p. 139. Appendix No. xxxix

3. Verelst's *View pp. 82-3*

he had made' in accepting the office of the Naib Nazim, it was resolved to make a distinction in his favour. His allowance amounted to 9 lacs but it was reduced to 5 lacs in 1771, that of Durlavram was two lacs (*Fourth Report ; Committee of Secrecy p. 102*). Shitab Roy "had an allowance of 25 thousand rupees per month for the expenses of his government, besides 5 thousand more for his own person."¹

The Deputy Diwan Dhirajnarain soon came to grief. He was reported against by Shitab Roy, and an inquiry was held by Mahomed Reza Khan with the result that "his revenues and Jaigirs were sequestered until the full balances due by him were liquidated but a small pension was meanwhile reserved for his support."²

What Golam Hossain calls Middleton's "unjust dismissal" took place early in 1767 and Thomas Rumbold,⁴ a Madras Civilian who was imported from Fort St. George by Clive and whose appointment to a seat in the Council had been objected to in Sept. 1766 by the members, was made the Chief at Patna and supervisor of collection.

1. He had been the Governor of Dacca. The rent of the province was between 38 and 39 lacs. This rent he had never paid to Mir Jaffar—*Auber I p. 347*.

2. So *Seir—III p. 15*. "Shitab Roy and Dhirajnarain had between them 1 lac."

3. *Seir—III p. 22*. The pension amounted to Rs. 1500 a month. Dhiraj tried to revenge himself upon Shitab Roy when the latter was accused of embezzlement.

4. Thomas Rumbold entered the Company's service in 1752 ; served under Clive at Calcutta ; was his A. D. C. at Plassey ; Member of the Council at Calcutta 1766-69 ; retired but came out again as Governor of Madras, 1778-1780 ; made a Baronet in 1778. Died in 1791.

The Zemindars in Bihar still continued to give trouble. The Select Committee found that "without the greatest care being taken to prevent the zemindars from carrying on long balances and defrauding Government under various pretences, the collections would soon dwindle to a sum insufficient to defray the charges and the authority of the administration would be despised."¹ They had, therefore to reverse their decision of 12th August, 1766, that the Company should maintain only such forces as were necessary for the defences of their own fortifications and territorial possessions, leaving the Government to be charged with all the rest,² and to resolve on March 27, 1767 that as "the Bihar revenues could not be collected without a force in the several *pergannas* to keep in awe the zemindars and as the three battalions of sepoys were not adequate for the service required, a new battalion should be raised and the *Perganna* sepoys should be increased in number and properly armed"³ "The *Pergunna* battalions" they reported to the Court on April 10, 1767,"were scarce half armed,"⁴ notwithstanding we detained 22 chests of arms

1. Letter to Court Sept.*8, 1766—*Long p. 465.*

2. *Long p. 447.*

3. *Long p. 523.*

4. *Verelet p. 52—Also p. 57.*

'The English army at this period consisted of three battalions each under a Colonel posted at the Presidency, Berhampore and Bankipore. Each brigade consisted of one European Regiment, six battalions of Sepoys and a proportion of Artillery with one hundred black horse. Besides these there were in different cities of the three provinces militia sepoys under the name of *Perganna sepoys*. These served for the purpose of guarding the treasuries where civilians were fixed to provide the Hon'ble Company's investments and to escort the fleets of boats from distant ports to the Presidency"—*Grana's Narrative p. 18.*

destined for the Presidency of Bombay. It therefore becomes necessary that the Military Storekeeper's indents be fully complied with and that we should in future receive the annual supply of musquetry required in the formal letters from the Committee." Attempts were also made to procure arms locally. An agate quarry having been discovered among the hills near Monghyr, arrangements were made for providing two millions of gun-flints to be kept in store for the supply of any future emergency.¹ The Supervisor was further directed to form a small magazine in the Factory for supplying military stores.² This magazine was to be under the control of the Chief and was distinct from the Grand Magazine at Bankipore under the control of the Commanding Officer of the Brigade there.³

The Zemindars of Ramgarh and Palamau were in arrears. The Chief proposed to dispatch a military force to reduce their forts and realise their debts.⁴ The Select Committee saw no necessity for sending a military force and permitted the Chief to strike off the old balances that were outstanding before the Company had been invested with the Dewani. But the Chief had already

1. Council to Court March 28, 1768—*Verelst p. 108.*

2. Letter to T. Rumbold dated the 27th March, 1767.

3. Letter to T. Rumbold, 14th August, 1768, in which the Chief was directed to demolish all private buildings in the vicinity of the Grand Magazine and to see that no buildings were erected within 200 yds. of it.

4. Letter to Rumbold, 14th Aug. 1768. The Rajas of Ramgarh and Palamau were practically independent under the Musalman Nabobs, and continued to be so till disputed succession led to English intervention and English control (1774). A military Collector was appointed under Hastings for the collection of revenue in these two provinces.

sent a force under Captain Fenwick. He now tried to justify his action on the ground that the arrears would not otherwise be realisable¹ and unless they were realised he could not make good the demands of the Collector-General. But the Committee insisted upon their orders being carried out. Captain Fenwick was recalled ; the military stores were returned to the Grand Magazine and the arrears of revenue due from the Zemindars were left unrealised.

The Committee, however, insisted upon exemplary punishment being inflicted on those who withheld just payment of the revenues.² Murtaza Kuli Khan, an *Aumil* was kept in confinement ; all methods short of corporal punishment were tried in order to induce him to discharge his balance but without effect. The failure to pay the balance in many cases was due to utter inability. There was the scarcity of coin accompanied by a terrible drought with a horrible famine in prospect. Mr. Rumbold set forth the distressed condition of the province in a letter to the Committee (13th Nov., 1768) and represented the necessity of making some reductions in the revenues. The Committee consulted Reza Khan ; his views coincided with Mr. Rumbold's and they consented "to make such deductions from the general statement of that province at the last *Puniyah* as might be deemed irrecoverable or such as might prove an immediate relief and encouragement to the ryots in the future cultivation of their lands."³ These deductions ranged from 5 to 10 p. c. but they gave no actual relief to the ryots.⁴

1. Letter from the Chief 4th Aug. 1759.
2. Select Committee in letter 20th June 1769.
3. Letter from the Chief at Patna 10th June 1769.
4. Letter to Court April 6,—*Verelst* p. 97.

Mr. Rumbold was an able officer. His work as Collector was highly commended by the Select Committee in their reports to the Court. He was able to recover in 1768 all but Rs. 46,205 out of the outstanding balance of Rs. 541,327.

With a view to safeguard public revenues from the fraud of the impostors and usurpers, the Select Committee "who had allowed the *Jaigirs*, *Altamghas*, freehold and private possessions of several people which had always been held free by Aliverdi Khan and his successors," to continue to remain so after their assumption of the Dewani, ordered that "all persons holding *Jaigirs* in Bihar should be directed to register their *Sanads* at the head Cutchery at Patna to prove their rights and titles."¹ Many *Jaigirdars* could not produce their *firman*s and were dispossessed of their *Jaigirs*. Mahomed Reza Khan compounded with some and allowed them to retain their possessions on payment of certain sums into the treasury. This order of the Committee afforded an opportunity to Raja Shitab Roy to make money by getting hold of the *Jaigirdars*' Charters and Vouchers on pretext of inspection and refusing to return them till they paid a sum of money proportionate to their income. It had, however, the effect of substantially improving the Company's revenue and checking imposture and usurpation. "That the Jagir lands" wrote the Chief "will produce a much larger yearly revenue than valued at in the enclosed statement is incontestible, were the Government to interfere in the collections and pay only the several sums agreeable to the present valuation from the Treasury to the claimants."² This suggestion could

1. *Seir III* h. 65.

2. *Long p.* 531

not be acted upon without annulling the *Jaigir* rights and so was not approved by the Committee.

In order to study things at first hand and "settle the *Bundabest* for the ensuing year Mr. Rumbold, after the collection of the year 1767 made a tour through the province accompanied by Raja Shitab Roy."¹ This perhaps accounts for the sympathy he so strongly evinced for the famine-stricken inhabitants of Bihar in his letters to the Committee and the warmth with which he pressed for remission of rent and other measures of relief. The next year, however, on account of the increased distress of the country he did not think it proper to make a tour.

On the report of Sir Robert Barker, Rumbold was desired to procure fir and timbers for the Company and to endeavour to extract tar and turpentine from the former. He got the Resident at Bettiah, Mr. Golding, to send down some which being approved of by the Court, foundation was laid of the Company's timber trade in Bihar. It was this desire of the Company to procure fir and timber, a plentiful supply of which was there in Nepal, that led to the expedition of Captain Kinloch in support of Raja Prakasmal, the Newar Rajah of Khatmandu, who was being hard pressed by the Goorcully (Gurkha) Raja, Prithwi Narain. Free intercourse with Nepal had been stopped. The Select Committee gave their consent to the expedition "provided it was sure to succeed" (21st July, 1767).² Un-

1. *Letter to the Select Committee, 10th Aug. 1769.*

2. "We are strongly induced to prosecute the intended expedition into that country. In the present declining state of commerce and scarcity of current species, we the more readily embrace a measure which promises to open new sources of trade, and stores of money to replace those annual drains of treasury we

fortunately the expedition failed ; the order for a second expedition had to be revoked on account of the demand from Madras for large supplies of men and money. Captain Kinloch was directed to stop where he was on the border of the Bettiah country adjoining Nepal (10th Feb., 1768) and to hold the country conquered with a view to make it reimburse the expenses of the expedition. But the revenues collected from the lands taken from the Gurkhas did not fulfil their expectation.¹ The Gurkha Rajah was eventually recognised ; the lands taken from him were restored on his indemnifying the Company for the expenses of the expedition (*Long p. 542*). Captain Kinloch died shortly after and was buried in the Patna Cemetery where his monument still stands.

The Directors having expressed a desire to learn whether trade with Nepal could be opened and if cloths and other commodities might find their way through Nepal to Tibet, Lasha and the western part of China, the Council deputed Mr. Logan of the Medical Service who had accompanied Captain Kinloch, to prosecute these inquiries (1770). This was the first mission of its kind ; it was followed by two others under Hastings. But none of them produced any practical results. It was not till 1792 that the trade relations between the two countries were placed on a permanent footing.²

are directed to make for supplying the China investment"—*Proceedings of the Select Committee, 21st July 1767.*

1. *Letter from Patna, 17th July 1769.*

2. *Auber. Vol. I p. 306.* The military despotism of the Gurkhas killed the trade with India. Two missions were sent by W. Hastings to revive it : one under Mr. Bogle in 1774 and the other under Captain Turner in 1778. But there was no practical

Besides attending to trade and collection of revenue and fighting famine and scarcity of specie, Mr. Rumbold had to be on the alert against the intrigues of Shujauddoulah whose conduct, never very apt to inspire confidence, had of late come to be regarded with particular suspicion. "He had made great progress in the new levies of troops, invited auxiliaries into his service, formed connections with foreign powers and had established a foundry which had already supplied him with a great quantity of cannon for field-service and had made amazing improvement in the manufacture of small arms."¹ With a view to arrive at some degree of certainty as to his future intentions the Select Committee decided to send a deputation to the Nabob Vizier consisting of three members, Messrs. Cartier, Russel and Smith. The deputation arrived at Patna on the 7th Nov., 1768 and the Chief of Patna was desired to attend to the deputation and comply with any requisition they might make of the *Perganna sepoys*. The deputation reached Benares on the 17th and concluded a new treaty with the Nabob on the 19th by which a certain limit was imposed upon the strength of the Vizier's army. This was, however, not approved of by the Court as it would not only give fresh cause of jealousy to Shujauddoulah but would engage the Company likewise in disputes with other powers still more distant, whereas they had always recommended to the Council at Calcutta to use their utmost endeavour to keep peace in Bengal and with other powers.²

result. Trade relations between the two countries were first placed on a permanent footing by the Commercial Treaty of 1792, negotiated by Jonathan Duncan, Resident at Benares.

1. *Auber Vol. I p. 191.*

2. *Letter to Bengal 11th May 1768—Auber I p. 197.*

But before this new treaty was concluded and even after it, strict watch had to be kept upon the conduct of his emissaries. The Chief of Patna had to do this. Two boats of Shujauddoulah laden with arms and stores on the Dehva were stopped which the Vizier retaliated by seizing the *Gomastas* sent to Gorakpore to procure timber for the Dinapore cantonments.¹ Shujauddoulah demanded restoration of these stores and arms and further urged that the officer who had detained them should be reprimanded. The Chief gave the Vizier a diplomatic reply. He had passed orders, he said, for the release of the boats, inquired if the arms and stores found buried in the sand on the banks of the Dehva were his and requested his instructions about them. The arms and stores were never restored. The deputation agreed to restore them on Shujauddoulah's giving a reluctant consent to the removal of the Frenchman M. Gentil² from his service, but they had been destroyed by the terrible fire that devastated Patna early in May, 1767.³

The fire referred to above "broke out close to the Factory which was entirely consumed as also the

1. *Letter from Patna, 18th April, 1768.*

2. Jean Baptiste Joseph Gentil (1726-1799) went out to India as an officer of Infantry Regiment. After the collapse of the French power in 1761 he served for some time under Mir Casim. Major Adams wrote to him to intercede for the prisoners whose heads Mir Casim had threatened to cut off (*Long. 342-3*). He next joined Shujauddoulah by whom he was loaded with favours. The efforts of the English to remove him from the Vizier's service did not succeed till after Sujah's death in 1775. He returned to France in 1778. M. Gentil seems to have been universally respected for his character. See *Chahar Gulza Shujhi. Elliot VII p. 224.*

3. *Letter from Patna, 16th April, 1769.*

Company's *Cotah* (pucca house) and every godown belonging either to them or private merchants. The fire raged so furiously that it was with difficulty that the Company's books and papers could be saved and the gentlemen escape to the Dutch Factory.¹ As they had no other place to retire to but Mir Abselt's and Company's gardens at Bankipore, both lately made the quarters of the Commander-in-chief, the Chief proposed to take possession of them. This outbreak of fire led the Committee to decide "to make all public buildings in future of bricks and to cover the cantonments at Monghyr and Dinapore that were then building with brick-pitched roof." The decision about a brick-built factory was not given effect to immediately for we shall see how three years later the factory was once again demolished by fire.

The last remarkable affair during the administration of Mr. Rumbold was the quarrel of the Chief with some military officers. Such quarrels had been but too frequent recently. We have seen how Macguire and Carnac could not pull on together in the affairs of Raja Ramnarain and how the latter even defied the authority of the Council at Calcutta. A spirit of insubordination had infected both civil and military departments and the steps taken by Clive for eradicating it were yet too recent to produce the desired effects. At Cossimbazaar Lieutenant Butler and the Acting Chief,

1. *Select Committee. 18th May, 1767.*—*Long p.* 479. Compare also "Our cantonment in 1767 took fire and such was the rapidity with which the *thatched* bungalows burnt that scarcely had any officer had one moment to save anything of his equipment. This accident gave rise to the erection of Barracks at Dynapore and Barrackpore on a grand scale." *Grand's Narrative p.* 19.

George Williamson, had fallen out and Lieutenant Butler had been dismissed by the Select Committee.¹ But in Bihar Mr. Rumbold had the worst of it in his rencontre with the military. Ensign Waller, evidently in charge of some of the *Perganna sepoys*, had been posted on the Dehva and he failed to report the passage of Shujauddoula's boats laden with stores and arms up the river till they were detected and detained by G. Wallen at the confluence of the Ganges and the Dehva. For this remissness of the officer Rumbold removed him from his station on the Dehva; he was also guilty of writing a letter to the Foujdar of Sahabad requesting him "to supply certain live-stock and to pay him a visit." The meaning of such a call was obvious. Rumbold ordered him to rejoin his battalion. But the Select Committee who had ordered his restoration to his station on the Dehva now demanded of Rumbold an explanation of his command. Rumbold explained and the matter rested there. But Rumbold must have felt that he had not come out of the affair with his dignity unimpaired. On June 13, Rumbold complained of the unbecoming conduct of Lieutenant T. Naylor. Evidently nothing was done or the Lieutenant was let off with only a censure, for we do not find the matter referred to again in any of the subsequent proceedings of the Select Committee.

Rumbold resigned and retired from the Company's service in Nov. 1769. He was succeeded by James Alexander who had been a member of the Select Committee since the resignation of Mr. Sykes in December, 1768.

When he came to Patna the famine was at the height of its fury. It was accompanied as usual by several

1. *Proceedings of the 5th Feb.. 1767.*

epidemic diseases¹ the most deadly among which was small-pox. "Vast multitudes were swept away; nor can their number be known but to Him who knows everything that is hidden and invisible," was the pious comment of Golam Hossain. One of the prominent victims claimed by that fell disease was Saif-ud-doulah, the Nabob of Murshidabad.

The distress of the country became more and more painful. The nominal remission of the land-tax brought no relief to the ryots and collection was made with cruel severity. The zemindars were oppressed but not for the purpose of lightening the burden of the poor tenants. "There was a large number of persons" wrote Mr. Alexander to the Committee² "confined in the *Katchari* at Patna for long-standing revenue-debts" and Shitab Roy had assured the Chief "that there was no chance of anything being recovered from them." They did not make any distinction between actual inability and deliberate recalcitrance and threw the defaulters into prison indiscriminately. The *Aumils* or *Sazais* who attempted to collect the revenues of the incarcerated zemindars often oppressed the ryots without benefiting their masters. The Committee ordered the release of all the prisoners³ except one and that was probably the

1. Diseases had been raging in the province since 1767. "We are extremely sorry to acquaint you" reported the Selected Committee to the Court in Sep. 1767 "that the last hot season has proved fatal to no less than 13 of your covenanted servants."

"The malignancy of the season did not confine itself to the Presidency but extended over the whole country. Most of the subordinates felt its dreadful effects nor did any of the brigades escape"—*Long* p. 489.

2. *Patna Letter, 16th March, 1770.*

3. *Select Committee's Letter, 29th March, 1770.*

zemindar of Siris-Cotumba.¹ This oppression of the Zemindars, continued and practised in a more unscrupulous manner during the administration of Warren Hastings by the then Roy Royan Kalyan Singh, bred a general disaffection among the Bihar zemindars and led many of them to join the standard of Chait Singh when he revolted.

The Zemindars had to make contributions of provisions to the Resident and probably to other officials as well and the ryots had to pay innumerable cesses.* The former formed the subject of discussion of the Select Committee at their meeting of the 28th April, 1770 and "they directed that any separate allowance to the Resident in lieu of the Zemindar's contribution of provisions should be discontinued." They, however, expressed their disapproval of the various cesses collected from the ryots. On 9th May, 1770 Mr. Alexander was asked to prepare an exact statement of the extra-taxes collected in Bihar for the extraordinary charges of Government. But as we find no further reference to this matter in the minutes of their subsequent meetings and as in reply to Mr. Alexander's request "for orders as to the collection of revenues for the ensuing year" they directed him in their letter dated the 25th Sept. "to pursue the usual course" we may take it that the cesses were not rescinded.

The troops stationed in Bihar formed a great burden upon the Treasury and a cause of oppression to the people. There was a brigade at Patna, a garrison at Monghyr, a battalion on the Karmanasa, besides the Pergana sepoy and they were always marching from

1. *Raja Narain Singh.*

2. *Proceedings of the Select Committee 28th April, 1770*

one place to another on account of the rumoured advance of the Sikhs and the Marhattas, the Rohillas and the Afghans into the territories of Shujauddoula and on account of the army of Mir Casim hovering on their borders. Mr. Harwood, the Supervisor of Bhagalpore and Rajmahal complained of "the acts whereby the troops and the camp-followers usually oppressed the inhabitants" and was told in reply that "the troops would be ordered not to do so."¹ One wonders if this order on paper without drastic punishments to back it proved in any way effective. Then the Commanders of battalions issued *perwannahs* or sent out sepoys for the collection of grain for the troops. Mr. Alexander strongly protested against this practice.² The Committee expressed their disapproval of it and wrote to the Commander-in-chief to put a stop to it but as they were told in reply³ that it would be difficult to comply with their orders prohibiting the issue of the *perwannas* and directing the Commanders to apply to the Chief of Patna for the necessary supply of grains", the matter was dropped so far as the Patna brigade was concerned. The Commanding officer at Monghyr was directed to use occasional *perwannahs* to be supplied by the Chief when he was unable to meet the demands of the garrison for grain. The Committee asked the Patna Treasury (April 28th) to meet the demands of the Monghyr garrison which had

1. *Letter from Harwood dated 10th Feb. 1779 and the Committee's reply dated 29th March.*

2. *Patna Letter, 4th May, 1770.*

3. *Proceedings of the Select Committee 26th May, and 21st June. Brig. General Sir R. Barker's letter considered by the Committee on the 13th June.*

hitherto been met from the Murshidabad Treasury. Mr. Alexander met the immediate demands of the garrison to the extent of Rs. 50,000, but pleaded his inability to assist them with any further sums and protested against the garrison expenses being made chargeable to the Patna Treasury.¹ The Treasury Accounts he submitted in support of his plea proved the absurdity of the demand and the Select Committee had to revert to the old arrangement.² But when Mr. Alexander recommended³ the removal of the brigade at Patna to some station within Raja Bulwant Sing or Nabob Shujauddoulah's country to afford some relief to his people, they refused to listen to him on political grounds.⁴ His recommendation for the removal of the two battalions of sepoy and the troop of cavalry stationed at Buxar to Dinajpore proved equally futile, but he was relieved of their presence, as Lieut. Col. Gaillez required them for the defence of the Kora Province against the rumoured advance of the Marhattas on Etawah.⁵

The first thing which the Select Committee did when they were faced with their troubles in the form of famine and scarcity of specie was to try and retrench their expenses. They reduced the stipend of the Nawab Nazim by 10 lacs; they discontinued the allowance to the Resident in lieu of the zemindars' contribution of provisions, they directed Mahommed Reza Khan to

1. *Patna Letters*, 26th Dec. 1769 and 12th May, 1770.

2. *Proceedings of the Select Committee*, 26th May.

3. *Patna Letter*, 28th April, 1770.

4. *Proceedings*, 3rd May.

5. *Patna Letter*, 7th June. *Letter from Lieut. Col. Gaillez*, 10th June.

keep the stipends and allowances in arrears¹ and ordered their Resident at the Durbar to withhold at least 30 lacs of Rupees from the tribute and other allowances, and spend this sum in paying the troops at Berhampore and the garrison at Monghyr; they directed Mr. Alexander that 'the *nizamut daks* should be withdrawn from certain places and the charges for the *daks* should not be paid, if possible, from the Treasury.² They inquired of him why a salary of Rs. 1500 a month was conferred by Lord Clive on Mah'ommed Yarkhan³ with a view to withdraw it, if they could do so with good grace. They were unable to increase the small stipends allowed to the families of Sarfarz Khan and Raja Dhirajnarain when the Resident wrote to them representing their distressed condition.⁴ In May died Raja Durlavram, the Dewan of Bengal, who had been, through the good offices of Clive, dignified with the title of Maharaja Mahindra by the Emperor and had had a Jaagir in Bihar conferred upon him. Raja Rajballav,⁵ his son, prayed that the post of his father together

1. *Letter from the Resident, June 1, 1770.*

2. *Proceedings, 9th June.*

3. An officer of Siraj-ud-doulah, a man of great influence and wealth, who joined the conspiracy against the Nabob and proposed himself as a candidate for the throne. At Plassey like Mir Jaffar and Durlavram he did not fight. (*Hill's Records*). He is better known as Mahomed Yarkhan Luty.

4. *Proceedings 26th Nov. 1769.* Dhirajnarain had a pension Rs. 7200 per annum. *Forrest's State Papers Vol. I p. 38.*

The family of Sarfaraz Khan is mentioned in the list of state prisoners in *Long p. 525* There were 11 members in his family who enjoyed stipends varying from 20 to 500 Rs. each and amounting in all to Rs. 1520.

5. *Letters from the Resident, June 1, and July 20.*

with the Jaigir and stipend might be given to him and the one held by him conferred upon his son Makunda-ballav. His prayer was supported by the Resident at the Durbar who requested the Committee to consider his father's long service and attachment to the English as also the fact that he had a large number of dependants to support. But the Committee abolished the post and as the Jaigir had been given to Durlavram for life, they declared that on his death it had reverted to the Company. They directed their Chief at Patna to incorporate the rents of the Jaigir with the *Jama* of the Bihar Province.¹

Another friend of the English died about this time, Raja Balwunt Singh, of Benares (Aug. 1770) and the succession of his son Chait Singh to the Zemindari, with the *Sanad* of the Nawab Vizier confirming the succession but stipulating at the same time a curtailment of some powers enjoyed by his father, must also have brought some money to the Company and their servants.

When however the Emperor demanded a *peshkush* of 3 lacs on the accession of Mubarik Doulah they

Raj Ballav's petition was considered by the Committee, in Sept. 1770.

Committees' letters to the Resident and the Chief of Patna 9th Aug. 1770.

Raja Raj Ballav afterwards became the Roy Royan or Dewan under the Revenue Council at Calcutta. In spite of his sonorous title, "he was", says Golam Hossain, "no more than a clerk to Mr. Ducarel, the President."

1. The Jaigir of his father was called "Nitpore." It had a yearly income of Rs. 18,7500—*Fourth Report of the Committee of the Secrecy pp. 104-132*

Raj Ballav had a jaigir of his own in Bihar; it comprised several *mahals* in pargana Nagurbass;—*Hand's Early English Administration of Bihar p. 74.*

directed their President to see that the *peshkush* was paid as it was the custom.¹ It was the Nawab who had to pay it, not they.

To mitigate the actual sufferings of the people the Select Committee did something though it was not much. Situated as they were on the verge of bankruptcy and with the imperfect machinery at their command it is doubtful if they could do much even if they really wished to do it. Besides the reduction of the rent by 5 p. c. which benefited the zemindars and the collectors but not the *ryots*, they allowed the Chief of Patna to distribute a certain amount of money daily to the poor of Patna and gave him permission to increase the amount, if necessary.² On the representation of Mr. Harwood, the Supervisor of Bhagalpore and Rajmahal they extended the distribution of *takavi* advances to the *ryots*.³ They asked the Nawab Vizier of Oudh "to give a most convincing proof of the sincerity of his friendship" by dispatching to Patna such quantities of grain as could be spared from the store in the Fort or otherwise procured. The Vizier had no grain to spare from the magazine, but he purchased some and sent it down at once.⁴ The dispatch of grain was reported by Captain Harper at Fyzabad on the 26th July. It was also the intention of the Committee to send agents to purchase grain in Bulwant Singh's country and the Chief recommended Mr. Motte,⁵ as a

1. *Committee to the Resident 9th May, 1770.*

2. *Letter to Patna, 26th Dec. 1770.*

3. *Becher's letter to Committee 13th Feb. 1770.* An interest of 40 p. c. was charged upon *Takavi* advances. *Bolts*, p. 150.

4. *Letters dated 3rd May 1770 and 19th May 1770.*

5. This was probably Mr. Thomas Motte, a well-known personage in the time of W. Hastings. Mrs. Motte was the bosom

person very well qualified for the work. Whether their intentions were translated into action or whether Mr. Motte was asked to act as an agent to purchase grain, is not known.

What little was done was done by private individuals. Shitab Rai with his characteristic magnificence set a noble example. He set apart a sum of Rs. 30,000 and directed that the boats and rowers of his household should bring regularly to Azimabad, three times a month, the grain purchased with that sum at Benares. It was sold at Benares-price to such people as were able to pay for their purchase; to the destitute it was distributed free. Besides rice, cooked food, small money, *bhang*, tobacco, and opium were distributed daily to the assembled beggars. His example was followed by the English and Dutch gentlemen of Patna who lodged the poor in several enclosures and had them fed, tended and clothed.¹

But these measures were confined to the town and gave relief only to an insignificant proportion of the people that groaned under the curse. "To judge from the city of Patna" wrote Mr. Alexander in January 1770 "the interior of the country must be in a deplorable condition. From fifty to sixty have died every day for these ten days past." When in March he made a short tour with Shitab Roy, he was struck with the abuses he found prevalent everywhere and was convinced that friend of the second Mrs. Hastings (Sydney Grier's *Letters of Warren Hastings*) He was at Benares in 1769 where he possessed "a chosen library" and where Mr. Grand first made his acquaintance. "Mott's Lane" in Calcutta was named after him. He died at Serampore in 1805. He was a merchant, but afterwards was perhaps a police officer in Calcutta.

1. *Seir Vol. III pp. 56-7.*

the interior of the country was far worse than he had imagined. In April matters grew worse still. "The miseries of this place" he wrote "increase in such a manner that no less than 150 have died in a day in Patna." Many sold themselves and their children into slavery to escape starvation. The Nawab Vizier of Oudh sent his men down to Patna in March, 1770 "to purchase a number of starving boys and girls for the service of his household" and requested the Chief at Patna to put all facilities in their way.¹ The Resident at the Durbar drew a still gloomier picture of the condition of Bengal. "The scene of misery that intervened and still continues, shocks humanity too much to bear description. Certain it is that in certain parts the living have fed on the dead and the number that has perished in these provinces that have not suffered is calculated to have been within these few months as six is to sixteen of the whole inhabitants."² Reading through the records one feels as if in these terrible times Bihar fared better than Bengal. Mr. Rumbold, Mr. Alexander and Shitab Roy seem to have been prompted by a sincere desire to mitigate the sufferings of the people and to have done all that they could do within the narrow limits of their power. There was no talk of rice being engrossed by Englishmen in Bihar; there was no Niametullah Khan, who though he had been only a menial servant to Mir Jaffar, died a steward of Reza Khan and worth 18 lacs, no Raja Amrit Singh³ who was accused of wresting a boat-load of rice

1. *Letters from Captain Harper at Fyzabad, 25th March, 1770.* Also *Chahar Gulzar* "many sold their sons and daughters for grain or for 4 or 8 annas a piece" *Elliot VIII p. 22.*

2. *Becher's letter, 2nd June, 1770.*

3. A favourite of Mahomed Reza Khan.

out of the hands of a number of famished wretches that had thrown themselves upon it.

The English had now come to see the anomalous character of the position in which they were placed by the dual system of government inaugurated by Clive,—that the Company should be the Dewan but the Nabob should be the Nazim, that they should enjoy the revenue without being responsible for the welfare of the people. They had reports come pouring in upon them from different quarters of the abuses of the administration, of corruption and oppression that had been impoverishing the country and grinding life out of the people. This terrible natural calamity brought the evils of the dual system home to their minds with irresistible force and they felt they must do something to help the poor country and afford some protection to the people. The plan that they could devise at the time was naturally crude and imperfect but it was a step in the right direction; it laid the foundation of that elaborate revenue administration of the country which successive generations of statesmen working patiently, at for years have been able to build up.

The Council thought that some check would be imposed upon the refractory zemindars and corrupt Aumils, if the collection of revenue and administration of justice within their *Dewani* were placed under the supervision of the European servants of the Company. The credit of inventing and maturing the scheme, such as it was, belonged to Governor Verelst who however did not remain in India long enough to observe its working. It would have been but small consolation to him if what he did for the scheme proved a failure. Verelst resigned on the 15th December 1769 and was succeeded by J. Cartier on the 17th. The Supervisors had been appointed ac-

according to Verelst's scheme, on the 10th, though they did not enter upon their duties till the collections of year were closed *i.e.*, about the month of March following. By July 1770 the Select Committee and the Council had come to see that the scheme did not answer. So they resolved, in the absence of the Commissioners who had been sent out by the Court to advise them but never reached their destination, to act upon the Court's orders of June 1769 on the subject of the Dewani revenue and establish in September 1770 two Councils of Revenue, one at Murshidabad and the other at Patna to whom the "Supravisors" who had formerly been under the direct control of the Resident at the Durbar, were subordinated.

The system of revenue administration by "Supravisors" was foredoomed to failure on account of its inherent defects. The elaborate "letter of instructions" sanctioned and circulated by the Committee in August, 1769 required the Supravisors to perform duties too many and too various for perfect strangers in a country to perform without a sound training and long experience. A Supravisor had to compile the history of the province and prepare detailed accounts of the state, capacity and produce of lands, of arts and manufactures, of trade and its regulations, of rents, taxes, cesses and duties. Besides all this he had to supervise the administration of justice according to laws he was quite unfamiliar with.

Secondly, the Supravisors were given only a controlling and "not an immediate, active power over the collections"; they had "the same negative voice in all judicious proceedings."¹

Lastly, their salaries being inadequate they were

1. *Form of Instructions Aug. 16, 1769.*

allowed to carry on private trade. No salary was fixed at the time of their appointment ; it was to be "determined after some experience of their monthly expenses had been gained."¹ Inadequate salary having to be eked out by private trade the Supravisors were naturally tempted to abuse the position of authority in which they were placed. The *Aumils* and *Zemindars* had taken alarm on their first appointment and had refused to take part in the management of revenue.² But their opposition did not last long. They soon discovered the malleable quality of their overseers and either worked their way into their good favour by pandering to their cupidity or deluded them into a blind confidence in them by taking advantage of their ignorance and inexperience ; and before long the native officers and the "Supravisors" were very good friends.

In Bihar there appear to have been only two Supravisors appointed. One, Mr. William Harwood who was placed in charge of Bhagalpore and Rajmahal and the other Mr. Ducarel who was put in charge of Purneah which had seen quite a number of governors in quick succession since the dismissal on pension of Rohiuddin Hossain in 1765. Rohiuddin was succeeded by Souchut Roy who falling into arrears was recalled and cast into prison after a year's enjoyment of power and Rezyuddin Mahomed Khan was appointed in his place. His tenure of office was equally short. He was followed by Mahomed Ali Khan who was superseded by Mr. Ducarel in 1770.² Mr. Ducarel, shortly after he had taken charge of his province, reported to the Resident at the Durbar the necessity of reducing to obedience a part of the Morung country and of affording

1. *Letter to the Resident at the Durbar, 28th April, 1770.*

2. *Resident's letters, 2nd June and 18th June, 1770.*

some slight assistance to the Raja against the Diwan.¹ We have seen how a timber trade had been opened with the Morung country. In January 1770 we find the Resident at the Durbar reporting to the Committee the steps he had taken for bringing timbers from Morung.² This timber-trade was the "necessity" Mr. Ducarel refers to in his letter. The Committee, however, refused to interfere in the petty disputes of the country and contented themselves by advising the Supravisor to send a detachment of troops for the protection of the Frontier.³

As we have stated above, in September 1770 a supplementary security against oppression and corruption was added in the form of the Revenue Council at Murshidabad and Patna. The Councils were to have the control of all business relating to revenue. The office of the Naib Subah was abolished. There was to be only a Naib Dewan for each of the two provinces. Mahomed Reza Khan continued to act as Naib Dewan at Murshidabad and Shitab Roy at Patna. All revenue business was carried through the Naib under his seal and signature. The Council was to sit daily or as often as necessary for minute attention to these important items of business :—the measures to be taken for the administration of revenue, the selection of the *Collectors* and *Supravisors* to be sent to the different districts, the powers with which they were to be invested were determined by the Council on the advice of the Naib.⁴

The Council at Patna consisted of the Chief, Mr. George Vansittant and Mr. Palk. Though appointed in September they did not begin work till the collection

1. *Purneah letters dated 4th April, 1770.*
2. *Letter from the Resident, 1st Jany. 1770.*
3. *Proceedings of the Select Committee, 15th April.*
4. *Auber*, Vol. I p. 278 etseq.

of the year was closed. They proved but an indifferent safeguard against corruption and oppression for the Committee had resolved not "to correct the abuses of so long a growth by any violent or sudden reform or to change the constitution, but to remove the evil by degrees." It was this determination of the Committee not to effect any violent changes that led them not to sanction the plan of the Chief of Patna for farming out the revenue of that province though they had approved of it.¹

The old dread of the Marhatta invasion grew in intensity as the Marhattas grew in power. The movements of the Rohillas and the Sikhs, the intrigues of Sujauddoulah at Fyzabad and of the Emperor at Allahabad were regarded with as great suspicion as ever. The Chief at Patna was constantly told to be on the alert "lest he was caught napping"; he was directed to keep an eye upon the two servants of Shujauddoulah who had been stationed at Patna;² to watch the movements of the different powers in Northern India and report them to the Committee,³ to give every assistance to troops proceeding from one part of the province to another or across the border into Shujauddoulah's country.⁴ The Chief represented to the Committee the ruined state of the fortifications of Patna and requested orders to repair them. The matter was referred to General Barker, the Commander-in-chief then at Benares; he was busy watching the movements of the Marhattas about Delhi and their efforts to get the Emperor in their power. Colonel Champion, the Commander

1. *Committee's letters to Patna, 8th June and 19th July.*
2. *Committee's letter, Nov. 7. 1770.*
3. *Patna Letter, 27th Feb.*
4. *Committee's letter 2nd Jan. 1771.*

of the brigade at Patna took the necessary steps for repairing the defences of the city and strengthening the garrison at Monghyr.

Towards the close of Mr. Alexander's administration in Nov. 1770 a terrible fire broke out near Lallbag at three or four in the morning and entirely consumed the roof of the great *Bungalow* and all the doors and windows.¹ The Company's papers "were saved partly by their having been deposited in a brickhouse in the Garden and partly to the exertions of Mr. Berrie," whom Secretary Droz recommended strongly to the succeeding Chief.

Mr. Alexander went over to Calcutta and as a member of the Select Committee took part in the proceedings of the 29th December. Mr. George Vansittart, a member of the Revenue Council acted as the Chief during his absence. He was at Patna in the month of February, 1771 but was almost immediately after recalled and Mr. Jekyll was appointed in his place. Mr. Jekyll's stay at Patna lasted only for a few months. It was in his time that the stores provided for the construction of a new factory were surveyed and reported on by Simon Droz, the *Buxey* or Secretary, and Thomas Lang, the Engineer. The timbers collected when Rumbold was the Chief "were declared unfit for any other use than that of piles to secure the banks of the river." Other materials too were found far from satisfactory. The work had to be done *ab ovo*.²

Richard Barwell, the son of William Barwell, a former Chief of Patna and whilome Governor of Bengal succeeded Jekyll; he too held office only for a short

1. S. Droz to Rumbold, 9th Nov. 1770.

2. Simon Droz to Jekyll 12th April 1770. *Bengal Past and Present* Vol. V. No 11 p. 362-3.

time. He returned to Calcutta early in 1772 to serve on the Council, act as a staunch friend of Warren Hastings and acquire and amass riches that enabled him to become the happy owner of the "Writers' Buildings" and "Kidderpore House." He died in 1804, a member of Parliament. Mr. Barwell did not get on well with George Vansittart of the Council, whose good graces Shitab Roy had won "by respectful behaviour and a number of curious presents." He was re-called to Calcutta and George Vansittart became the Chief of Patna and the President of the Revenue Council which now consisted of Messrs Stevenson, Droz, Ewan Law and Raja Shitab Roy. George Vansittart was the Chief at Patna when Hastings assumed charge at Calcutta as the Governor of Bengal on the 13th April, 1772.

THE CONCLUSION.

Early in the year 1772 the position of the Company was anything but prosperous. We have seen how in the year 1769 His Majesty's Government interfered for the first time in the affairs of the Company and how Parliament passed two laws regulating the amount and manner of fixing the dividends and forcing them to pay £400,000 a year into the public exchequer. In 1769 also the agreement was renewed for five years, but the Company found themselves faced with a pecuniary crisis, the revenues falling off and expenses increasing, so that instead of gaining dividends they found themselves burdened with debts. The Commission they sent out to correct the abuses never reached its destination. In 1770 they were on the verge of bankruptcy. There was a terrible famine raging in Bengal and Bihar ; an expensive war going on in the Carnatic and equally expensive operations had to be carried on in northern India. Their contribution to the public exchequer had been left unpaid and there was a great public outcry. Parliament, being moved to interfere in the affairs of the Company, appointed two Committees : one a Secret, the other a Select Committee, to make an exhaustive inquiry into the nature, state and condition of the East India Company. It was on the reports of these Committees that the impeachment of Clive was proposed and the Regulating Act of 1773 was passed. But before the Committees submitted their final report the Court of Directors had attempted to check the abuses and improve the revenue by "standing forth as the Dewan" and appointing Warren Hastings Governor with secret instructions to institute a minute inquiry into the conduct

of the Company's servants and suppress abuses with an iron hand. Neither in Bengal nor in Bihar had the appointment of *Supravisors* supported by the Revenue Councils mended matters. The Court of Directors were justified in their suspicions that their own servants had entered into a collusion with the native officers to oppress the people and rob their masters.

They had fixed Karmanasa as the limit of their territorial acquisitions and resolved to maintain the kingdom of Shujauddoulah as a buffer state by helping him with troops kept for the purpose at Allahabad. The enemy they were most afraid of were the Marhattas and they were particularly anxious that the Emperor who was living as their pensioner did not fall into their hands. The Emperor, however, was longing to return to Delhi and he sent his minister, Muniruddoulah, to the English to solicit their assistance for his restoration to his ancestral throne. But the English would much rather have him stay where he was, or, as the Court of Directors suggested, take up his residence at Monghyr or Rajmahal. When the Marhattas captured Delhi Shah Alum threw himself into their arms and was taken by them to Delhi. The provinces of Allahabad and Korah were committed to the Government of Muniruddoulah and he remained in charge till they were sold by Hastings to the Nabob Vizier. Muniruddoulah died a year after this transaction and his body was brought to Azimabad to which town he belonged and buried in a mausoleum in a corner of Assadulla Khan's palace which he had purchased and where his eldest son lived.¹

1. Muniruddoula's descendants yet live at Patna and are known as the Bhiknapahari family. They still enjoy a pension from Government.

Shujauddoulah now became the chief object of care of the English; they supported him against his enemies and yet always suspected him of intriguing against them. What they did not like in him was the ready welcome he accorded to European adventurers who trained his army, built his fortresses and manufactured his arms and ammunition. Messieurs Medec and Gentil, particularly the latter, were their nightmare. At every negotiation they insisted upon Shuja's dismissing his foreign favourites; and to guard against the dangers of other adventurers making their way to him or to the enemies farther in the north they issued strict instructions to the Council of Revenue at Patna "to prevent the emigration of unlicensed Europeans out of the Company's provinces and send down to the Presidency all unemployed Europeans that were scattered about Patna."¹ So strict was the vigilance of the Council of Revenue that they insisted upon the Commanding Officer of the First Brigade at Patna to take out passports from the Chief when officers under his command proceeded to Benares or Allahabad."² Col. Champion insisted that passports in such cases should be granted by the Commanders, and the matter led to a brisk passage-at-arms between the Council and the Commanding Officer.

The English were, however, now perfectly safe from the rivalry of the trading companies of other nations. The French Company since 1763 had well nigh given up their trade operations. The Dutch carried it on a modest scale, taking good care not to excite the jealousy of their powerful rivals.

1. *Council Letter, Dec. 19, 1771.*

Letter from Patna, 23rd Jany, 1772.

2. *Patna Letter, 16th December, 1771.*

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I.

Mahomedan Governors of Bihar from the time of the Earliest English Intercourse.

1. Moquarreb Khan (1618-1621)
2. Prince Pärvez through his deputy Muchlis Khan (1621-24)
3. Shah Jehan (1625)
4. Rustum Khan Sufi (1626-28)
5. Casim Khan (1629-37)
6. Abdulla Khan (1637-39)
7. Saista Khan (1639-48)
8. S'adulla Khan through his Deputy, (name unknown)—(1649-1656)
9. Separ Sekho through his Deputy, Bahadur Khan (1657-1658)
10. Alawardi Khan—1659.
11. Daud Khan Quarishi (1660-1665)
12. Laskar Khan (1666-70)
13. Ibrahim Khan, "the bookish Nizumzee" (1671-1677)
14. Prince Azam (1678)
15. Saif Khan (1679-84)
16. Buzurg Umed Khan (1685-1693)
17. Fida Khan or Saleh Khan (1693-97)
18. Azim-us-shan (probably through his Deputy, Sarbaland Khan till he came to reside at Patna in 1703, (1697-1706)
19. Sarbaland Khan (1706-1709)
20. Syed Hossain Ali Khan (1709-1712)
21. Ghairat Khan (1712-20)
22. Mir Jumla (1715-1716)

23. Nasarat Yar Khan (1717-20)
 24. Murshid Kuli Khan (probably through a Deputy)
(1721-25)
 25. Fakeruddoulah (1725-29)
 26. Sujauddoulah through Aliverdi Khan (1730-40)
 27. Zaynuddin Ahmed or Haibut Jung (1740-1747)
 28. Sirajhuddoulah through Raja Janaki Ram (1747-53)
 29. Raja Ram Narain (1753-63)
 30. Raja Rajballav
 31. Raja Nobut Roy
 32. Mir Mehdi Khan
 33. Mir Casim Khan or Itimuddoulah (1764-65)
 34. Dhu'aj Narain 1765 (Naib Subah)
 35. Shitab Roy (1765-72) Do
- } 1763.
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APPENDIX II.

Agents and Governors of Hugli and Fort William in Bengal.

1. James Bridgeman (1650-57)
2. George Gawton (1657-58)
3. Jonathan Trevisa (1658-1662)
4. William Blake (1662-68)
5. Shem Bridges (1668-69)
6. Henry Powell (1669-70)
7. Walter Clavell (1670-77)
8. Matthias Vincent (1677-82)
9. William Hedges (1682-84)
10. William Gyfford (1684)
(Aug. to Oct)
11. John Beard (1684-85) (Subordinate to Madras)
12. Job Charnock (1685-1693) (Independent of Madras)
13. Francis Ellis (Subordinate to Madras) (1693-4)
14. Charles Eyre (1694-98)
15. John Beard, the Younger (1699)
16. Sir Charles Eyre (1699-1701), President and Governor of Fort William.
17. John Beard, the Younger (1701-02), second time
18. John Beard and Sir Edward Littleton
in the Rotation Government (1702-05)
19. Ralph Sheldon and and Robert
Hedges (1705-10)
20. Sir Anthony Weltden (1710-11)
21. John Russel (1711-13)
22. Robert Hedges (1713-17)
23. Samuel Feake (1717-23)
24. John Deane (1723-26)

25. John Frankland (1726-28)
 26. John Deane (second time) (1728-32)
 27. John Stackhouse (1732-1746)
 28. John Forster (1746-48)
 29. William Barwell (1748-49)
 30. Joseph Dawson (1749-52)
 - 31.^s John Fytche (1752) for one month only.
 32. Roger Drake (1752-1757).
 33. Colonel Clive (1758-60)
 34. J. Z. Holwell (1760)
 35. Henry Vansittart (1761-65)
 36. John Spencer (1765)
 37. Lord Clive (1765-1767)
 38. Harry Verelst (1767-1769)
 39. John Cartier (1769-1772)
 40. Warren Hastings—Governor of Bengal (1772-74)
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